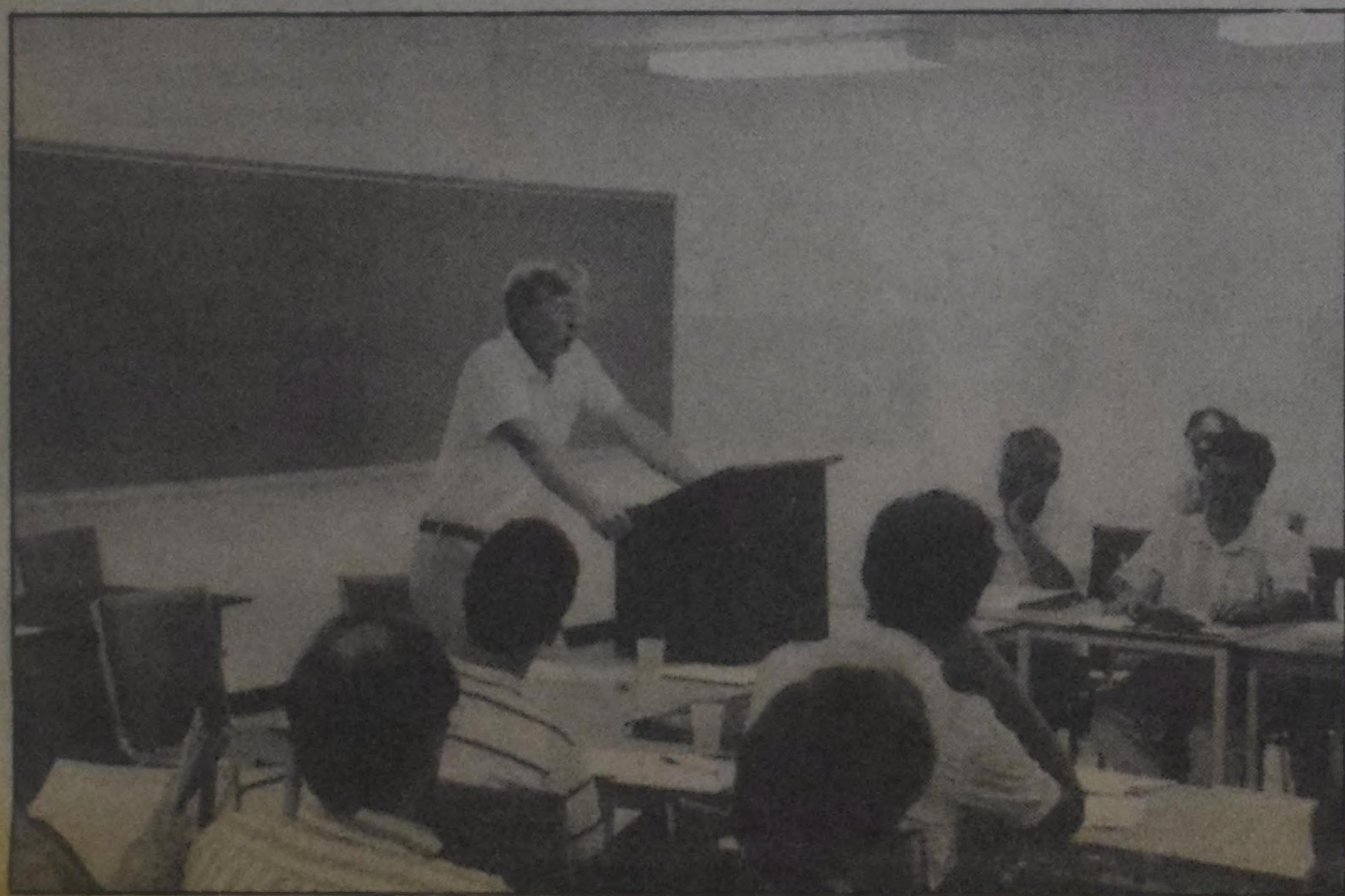


Calvinist Contact

A Reformed Weekly

SEPTEMBER 11, 1992/48th year of publication/No. 2320

Pascal's conference probes relation of faith and science



Del Ratzen leads a workshop in the area of meta-science.

Photo: Riek De Groot

Robert VanderVennen

ANCASTER, Ont. — If you bring together for four days some of the world's leading thinkers on the relation between the Christian faith and natural science, you will see sparks fly and new insights all around.

The Pascal Centre at Redeemer

College organized an international conference for the purpose of reviewing the current state of scholarship on the interaction between faith and science and to identify areas for further research.

About 150 people — physicists, biologists, chemists, mathematicians,

philosophers, historians and theologians — from North America, Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, and South Africa — participated. They all wanted to span more than one discipline, to talk about questions of meaning in the sciences.

Faith and wisdom essential

The conference had a strong Reformed theological and philosophical core, but scholars with other views, including Roman Catholic, also made important contributions.

Jitse van der Meer, biologist at Redeemer College and director of the Pascal Centre, opened the conference by remarking that a proper relation with the Creator is crucial for scientists to have a proper understanding of his works. Science needs belief in God in order to stay humble, he said, and belief in God makes the Bible central for understanding the cosmos.

Thomas Torrance of Edinburgh, Scotland, accented the biblical notion of wisdom (*sapientia*) in relation to science. Intuition and the indefinable

are essential to science, he said, and they reflect the transcendental role of wisdom in science.

Mapping relations of faith and science

English historian John Brooke contributed an effort at mapping the relations between science and faith as they have appeared in the past. He said that nothing less than a three-dimensional map is necessary to indicate the complexity and richly-marked efforts to identify the relationship.

Stephen Wykstra cautioned that religion has sometimes been merely a veneer for science, a way of bringing a religious buzz into science. But he added that worldview considerations are not a veneer and may even be essential to the evaluation of scientific theories.

Kars Veling of the Netherlands said that faith and science are unequal partners because faith has a different logical base than science. Biblical faith can refute certain theories, such as naturalistic evolution, and science can

See KUYPER'S — p. 2...

Exchange student found South African referendum exciting

Bill Fledderus

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Rita Lammers is a remarkable 18-year-old. Not only is she an accomplished violinist, but recently she also spent a year on an exchange program in the Orange Free State of South Africa.

Lammers stayed with five different host families in the city of Welkom. Her stay was organized and funded by the Rotary Club of Welkom, although she paid for her own air fare and personal expenses. The Rotary Club also organized speaking engagements in various other parts of the country for her.

In Welkom she attended Grade 12 at an Afrikaans high school, a grade she has already completed here in Canada, in order to make friends and learn the Afrikaans language.

"It was sink or swim when it came to the language," says Lammers, who is now quite fluent in Afrikaans. "Most of

the other exchange students they've ever had in the area attended English schools, but I asked for this."

Lammers has unconsciously picked up some vocal mannerisms from her former hosts: she intersperses her talk with a British-sounding "Ye-es" and an Afrikaans-sounding "Ya-ah."

A day at the polls

On March 17 of Lammers' stay, South Africa held a yes/no plebiscite (in which only whites could vote) to determine whether the political reforms of President F. W. de Klerk should be continued. Lammers spent the day at a polling station.

"You could really feel the tension in the air," she says. "The AWB [a violently right-wing political group headed by Eugene Terreblanche] was out driving around and making their presence felt at various polling stations."

"At my station, just a few of them showed up in a beat-up old *bakkie*, a pick-up truck. It said 'Official vehicle of the AWB' on the side. I had a good laugh at that, and the people around laughed too."

"The Afrikaner students are very religious, idealistic people," says Lammers. She says she had a hard time reconciling the sincerity and enthusiasm some expressed about their Christian faith with their racism.

While Lammers tried to avoid political arguments with other students, she says she quickly found out that most of them still believe that "blacks aren't human. They bring the Bible out right away and argue from it that Adam and Eve were white and other things like that."

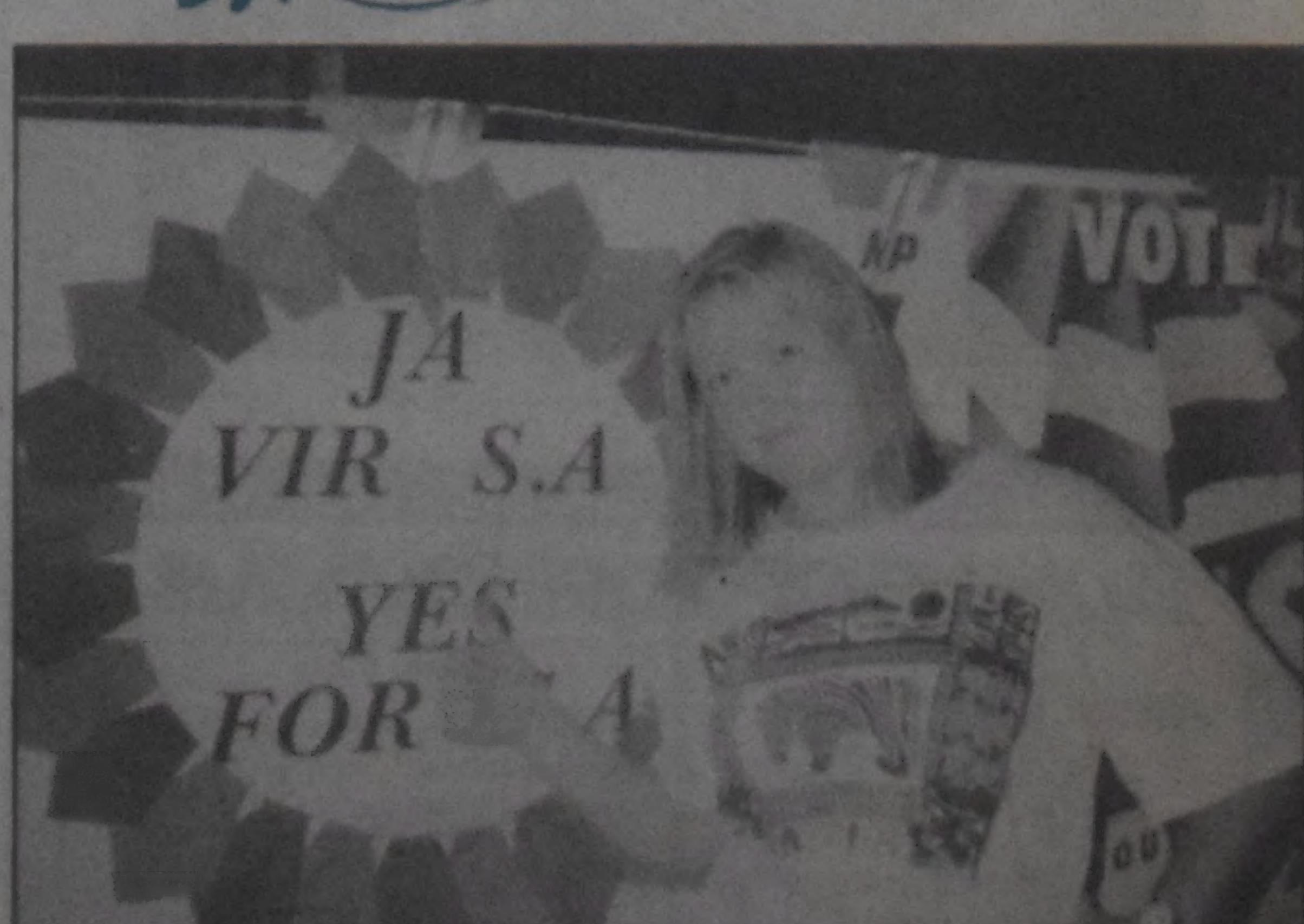
"When they would do that, I would just cringe, and I felt like saying 'Please don't bring religion into this.' It's hard for me to believe that their ideas

about blacks are such that they don't welcome them into their church," she says.

However, many Afrikaners "and I think all the Rotarians I

met" still support the current reforms of the country's *apartheid* laws, she says.

See EXCHANGE — p. 2...



Rita Lammers, 18, would have voted "Ja" in the referendum if she had been a South African citizen.

News

Exchange student brings music to South Africa



Photo courtesy *Die Volksblad*.
Rita Lammers performed solo violin during a performance of *Edouard Lalo's Symphonie Espagnole* during her stay in South Africa.

...continued from p. 1

While Lammers was in South Africa primarily to learn about South Africans and was kept quite busy with school and her duties to the Rotary Club, she also found time to play her violin.

"I wouldn't have met half the people I did if I hadn't brought my violin," she says.

Even before her arrival, the Rotary Club had found an instructor for her so that she could continue her violin studies. Lammers made the most of her opportunities, earning the position of assistant concertmaster with the Orange Free State Youth Orchestra and giving a solo

performance at a youth concerto festival in Bloemfontein. She also enjoyed a ten-day stint with the South African National Youth Orchestra.

Proud to be Canadian

Lammers says she is more patriotic after having been away from Canada.

"Most South Africans never get out of their own country. Many blacks from the inland townships have never even seen the sea, and can be quite naive in their questioning. You can imagine how much explaining I had to do about where Canada was and how it was not just a part of the United States."

"I had to be really well-informed to talk about my country. People often tried to compare the treatment of blacks in South Africa with the treatment of Natives in Canada. I even had to learn some things about Canada while I was there," she says, in order to show them the extent to which that comparison oversimplifies the situation.

"It can be kind of awkward when the only impressions people have of Canada is American soap operas," says Lammers. "And most of them don't even have that, because television has only been around for 18 years. There are only three channels, so it's not a

great attraction, and it's too expensive for many people anyway."

Her parents and her brother William visited with her in Welkom for three weeks during July. Now they are all back in Canada, and she is at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., beginning four years of study to become an occupational therapist.

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Kuyper's approach scrutinized

...continued from p. 1
lead to new ways of reading the Bible.

In one of the conference's 52 workshops Del Ratzsch of Calvin College identified extra-empirical factors that enter science, but suggested that because most of them are imposed on us by the world we all experience, there does not seem to be coming into existence the distinctively Christian natural science that Abraham Kuyper argued for. In responding to a question

about that from William Hasker of Indiana at one of the ten plenary sessions, Henk Geertsema of the Free University of Amsterdam said that he finds Kuyper's approach less satisfactory than that of Herman Dooyeweerd, who gives a structure for science that characterizes its own nature.

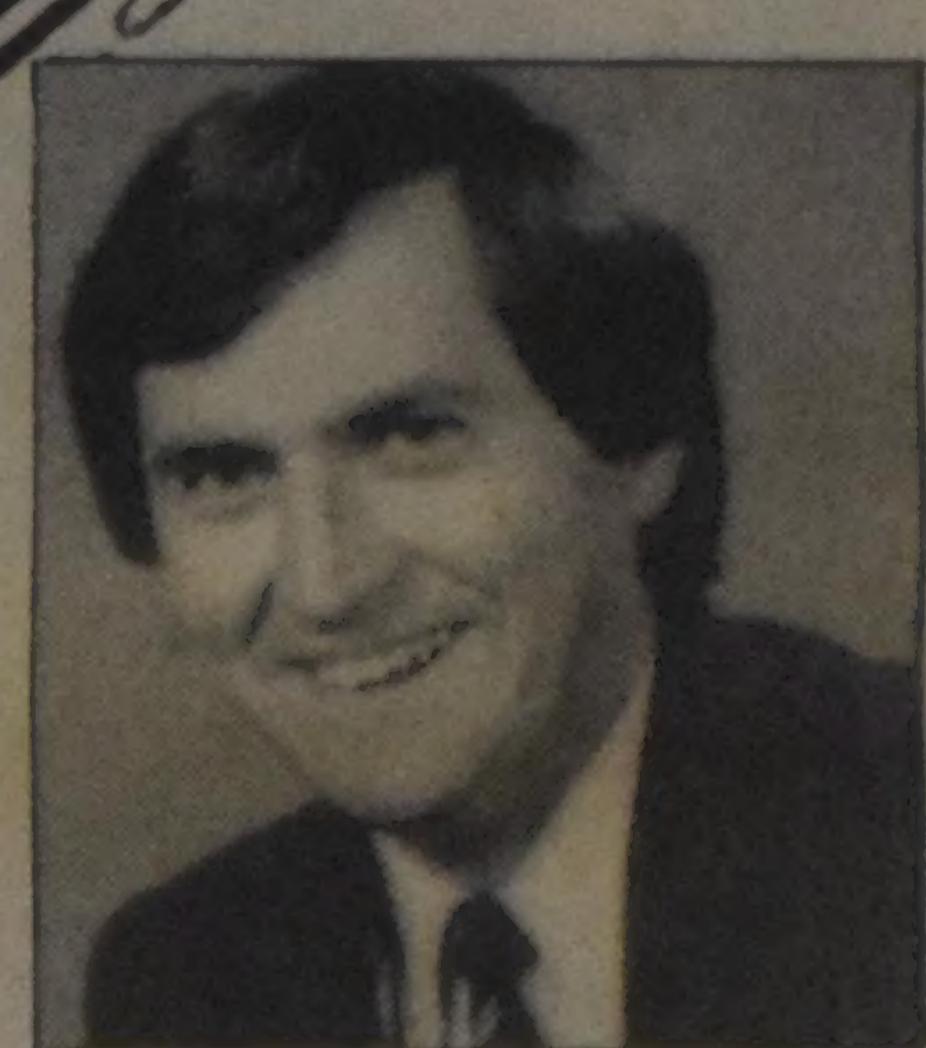
Not only could a person not attend all the workshop sessions at the conference, but a certain amount of what was heard went over the heads of

those listening. It was clear that the relation of science and faith is a big topic, and many different views were expressed.

But there was an air of excitement, of engagement with important ideas that give one something to think about and influence further research. The Pascal Centre promises to publish the papers, and to call another conference in two years.

Perspective on Politics

Paul Marshall



Looking East

Despite the increased stress on international trade the world, in fact, appears to be carving itself into regional trading blocs. Canadians are anxiously following the agreement to weave Mexico into the present Canada-U.S. free trade agreement. The further integration and possible expansion of the European Economic Community are well known.

Less well known is the explosion of trade within East Asia. Apart from the powerhouse of Japan, there are the vibrant economies of South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. There is rapid growth in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. Behind these lurks the promise of China, whose coastal "Special Economic Zones" (each more populous than most countries) are undergoing one of the longest and largest economic expansions in world history. The trading areas of East Asia may well leave the rest of the world in the dust.

Returning to East Asia after several years, it is hard to escape a sense of returning to the centre of the world — the people more numerous, the buildings taller, the cities bigger, the pace faster.

Myopic view

Canada and the U.S. seem neurotically obsessed with their own (comparatively minor) internal problems. Europe seems similarly introverted, watching Bosnia but awaiting the coming referenda on further European political integration. While there are problems enough in Asia, most countries are still looking and planning far ahead. They expect to be the heart of the world economy in the 21st century.

Canadians, apart from some of the West Coast, are by and large oblivious to these developments. We look, of necessity to the United States but, beyond that, we focus largely on Europe. We still tend to think of the North Atlantic

as the hub of it all.

If we learn any language we learn English, French, German or Spanish. Japanese and Chinese are far from most of our thoughts. Asians are shaping and will re-shape this country, but for many of us they are still merely "immigrants."

The Christian church is not immune to this myopia. We ignore these economic changes (as we do most world economic changes). But we even miss many of the changes in the church itself.

The Christian church in Korea continues to grow, as it has done for decades. Now nearly a quarter of Koreans are Christians in some sense. The Church in Indonesia also grows rapidly while, as far as we can tell, the church in much of China has been experiencing a revival. It is likely that more people worship on Sundays in each of these last two countries than in the entirety of Western Europe.

These facts have not sunk in. Despite our best intentions we (and certainly our secular compatriots) still see Christianity as a European (or a white person's) religion, with off-shoots in the Third World. But the Holy Spirit has moved faster and further than our imaginings.

Some colleges, such as Regent College and Ontario Theological Seminary, have Chinese study programs, largely to interact with Canada's burgeoning Chinese Christian population. But for most of us, it's time we started to look East. This is true for Canada generally, and for Christians in particular.

Paul Marshall is J. Omar Good Visiting Distinguished Professor of Evangelical Christianity in Pennsylvania and professor of political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto.

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Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



Pressreview

The big sale is on. The premiers are singing the praises of the new Constitution, which is really only an amendment to the old Constitution Act of 1867. Never has any amendment caused such debate and such national anxiety. The first Charlottetown Conference started on Sept. 1, 1864. New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only wanted to discuss a maritime union, but representatives from the province of Canada, who had asked to attend, persuaded the Eastern colonies to work toward a general union of British North America.

Also on Sept. 1, in the year 1905, Alberta and Saskatchewan joined the confederation. Mr. Boubou, as Quebecers call their premier, resorted to the old and tried political manoeuvre in order to whip his party's convention into shape: when in doubt, bus in the supporters from anywhere. The result was a "unanimous" decision to have a referendum on the constitutional deal. The referendum will be held on Oct. 26. Mr. Boubou knows how to plough his furrow.

Fere Jacques, licking his wounds, invited the defeated young Liberals to join the P.Q., but his invitation was not accepted. The *Globe and Mail* of September 1 published the complete text of the constitutional amendment. The General Council of the United Church, never shy about making political statements, refused to endorse a prayer for a unified Canada. The reason was that such a prayer might offend Quebec separatist members.

Just when I am about to spend a little time in Europe the Canadian dollar dips out of sight to a new record low. My luck! Someone said that to eat well in England you should have breakfast three times a day. Having spent some time at Heathrow Airport I can testify to the truth of that saying.

An Ontario human rights tribunal ruled that homosexual "significant

others" have the same pension rights as heterosexual spouses. This could mean a reversal of an earlier ruling which excluded homosexual partners from work-related benefits, and it could add millions of dollars to Ontario's expenditures.

If it has suddenly gotten very quiet on the street where you live, yes, summer is over and the children are doing the three "r's" again. Summer over, a swimwear shop advertised: "FOR SALE: hundreds of bikinis for ridiculous figures."

★★★

Students who received financial assistance under the Canada Student loan program are doing the dead-beat-number, leaving the government holding the bag to the tune of just under \$1 billion. The government stands to lose at least \$270 million as payment to collection agencies who will try to make the delinquents pay. Revenue Canada can also deduct amounts owed from income tax refunds.

★★★

The Supreme Court reversed

the conviction of Ernst Zundel, the anti-Semite who was sentenced on charges of publishing "false news." The Jewish Congress is laying more charges against him. Methinks that that nut gets way too much attention.

★★★

Relief is arriving in the hurricane stricken areas of the United States, but there is general dissatisfaction with the delayed response to the catastrophe. The President has sent in the army and only now is the relief work taking on some form of organization.

There are many other disaster areas in this world which still groan in travail. Famine in Somalia is causing the deaths of thousands. That country is in a state of total anarchy. Roaming gangs of bandits steal relief supplies at will.

Sarajevo remains the scene of hellish hatred between fighting factions and civilians, more often than not, become the innocent victims.

★★★

Neo-Nazi nuts are doing the Nazi-ugly things in Germany.

Germany is suffering from reunification symptoms. The *Suddeutsche Zeitung*, mixing metaphors like the chopper of a food processor mixing dough, said that the sinking ship of Kohl's government had set an avalanche in motion. I will be in Germany in the coming weeks to take the pulse of the nation, and I'll let you know.

★★★

There are signs of hope in the Middle East. Israel's new government has released Palestinian prisoners, and there might be a breakthrough in negotiations with Syria about the Golan Heights. Who knows? Peace might yet break out in the land where the Lord walked the dusty trails teaching humanity the lessons of forbearance.

★★★

Just about when Disney World in Paris opened, the French magazine *l'Express* called France the most "Americanized" country in Europe. There is, of course, one significant difference: the French drink 10 times as much wine as Yankees do. That, says the magazine, explains why in

America, of every 100,000 men between the ages of 35 and 64, 315 die of heart disease. In the same age category only 174 French men die of the same ailment. *Vive la difference!*

★★★

Hungary is trying to attract tourists. The tourism bureau wants to change the country's image from goulash and gypsy music to the more cultural heritage of its history. Any time now we will see package tours to Hungary advertised.

★★★

The president of Brazil has been caught with his hand in the till, and the country is preparing to do a Richard Nixon on him.

★★★

And I leave you with this to ponder: How do you recognize Ronald McDonald in a crowd? ... He's the one with sesame seeds on his buns.

Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church.

Electoral reform would favour major parties, warns economist

Bill Fledderus

VANCOUVER — The royal commission on electoral reform (the "Lortie Commission") released its final report earlier this year. According to Filip Palda, an economist with the right-leaning Fraser Institute, the report is an unabashed plea to protect large parties and prevent the growth of new parties and single-issue groups. He made his views known in *Fraser Forum*, one of the Fraser Institute's monthly publications.

Palda defends small parties and lobby groups as essential ingredients in a truly representative democracy, whereas the commission report wants to strengthen the role of "parties as primary political institutions."

Young or small political movements are always in the more difficult position of trying to change the status quo and in a tighter financial situation, since they must compete against high-profile incumbents who have all the advantages of office (such as staff, publications, travel), says Palda.

Limits hurt the 'little guy' most

The commission has recommended a \$1,000 limit on advertising during election campaigns. Such a limit goes against the Charter guarantee of free speech, asserts Palda. It would prevent short-term blitz techniques used by smaller

groups and favour year-round campaigning, which those in power are in the best situation to carry out.

"Spending limits ... would entrench large parties and favour the chances of incumbent candidates," he says.

Education or advertising?

The commission has also recommended an annual \$3 million in government funding be allocated to party foundations for "political education." Palda argues that

the guidelines for such activities are so broad that many would be hard to distinguish from direct campaigning. Because the money would be delivered in proportion to past votes, new parties would receive nothing while old parties could "rest on their laurels."

Other proposed laws which would hurt young political movements and small lobby groups, says Palda, include the shorter elections, restrictions on the publication of polls during elections and the establishment of a "Canada

Elections Commission" which could refuse to register new parties, thus depriving them of subsidies. Such deprivation could prove fatal to the smallest and weakest, suggests Palda. New parties often "do not bloom overnight or rise suddenly on crests of enthusiasm."

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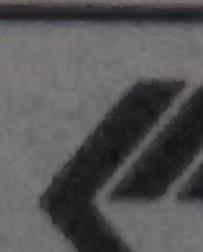
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— reports on significant happenings in the Christian community and in the world,
— expresses opinions that are infused by Scripture and Spirit and rooted in a Reformed perspective,
— provides opportunities for contact and discussion for the Christian community.

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 Office hours: 8:15 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Editor: Bert Witvoet

General Manager: Stan de Jong

Associate Editor: Marian Van Til

Assistant Editor: Robert VanderVennen

Staff Journalist: William Fledderus

Correspondents:

Kathy Vanee: Mt. Lehman, B.C.; **Thea Ewald:** Smithers, B.C.; **Margaret Van Ginhoven:**

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Accounting: Corrie de Jong

Advertising: Suzanna Brasz

Circulation & Mailing: Grace Bowman

Layout & Design: Cecilia van Wylick

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Proofreading: Pamela Martin

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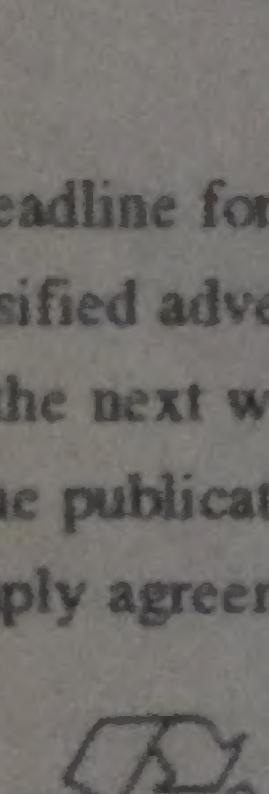
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Bob Rae is a material man for sure

If you live in Ontario you may find yourself at odds with your provincial government. The New Democratic Party's vision and policies are mercilessly unfolding as Premier Bob Rae and his colleagues take the province further into the '90s and further away from former things, sometimes referred to as traditional values. (It's passing strange, as one woman caller aptly remarked on a CBC radio show recently, that so many in our society automatically respect traditional values when these have a Native origin but treat them scornfully when they trace their roots to the Christian or Western civilization.)

We hate to do it, but...

Of late, Premier Rae's government has shown its colours in ways that most people of principle will not appreciate. Acting against former promises not to give in to lobbyists, the government first allowed Sunday shopping and then casino gambling, all in the name of economic necessity.

Private day schools have so far received no indication that they will receive treatment equal to that given to public and separate schools. It would be too much to expect the Rae government to respond positively to a recent Ontario court decision that acknowledged that the rights of private school parents are being violated. The premier will probably once again resort to the "economic necessity" argument, and he will have a convenient back-up weapon in the accompanying Ontario court judgment that the public interest permits a violation of rights.

Pretty soon the New Democrats will pay off their debt to the labour movement by introducing labour laws that will tip the balance of power in favour of the unions. What good will those new rights be to union members when the company they are socking it to might be forced to close its plant because it can no longer compete?

Some things to cheer about

Some things the NDP government has done are laudable. We do appreciate its willingness to recognize Native right to self government and its commitment to assure that Natives take part in constitutional talks. We must give Premier Rae full credit for the positive role he played at constitutional talks in bringing Quebec and other provinces closer to an agreement in principle about the Senate and Quebec as a distinct society. By and large, the premier shows himself to be a straightforward, intelligent, articulate and caring person.

But when it comes to protecting the moral fabric of our society or recognizing the role religion plays in it, don't come knocking on the door of the NDP caucus. There is a sign on that door that reads: "Ontarians shall live by bread alone."

Of course, it would not be out of line to say that all the other major parties and most other

governments in Canada fear a stagnant economy more than they fear bearish morals or a spiritual deficit.

Not like introducing a new car

What do we as citizens do when we see this headlong rush into a world of pragmatism, materialism and practical atheism?

Vaclav Havel, former president of Czechoslovakia, wrote about a somewhat similar situation in October 1978, when Czechoslovakia was still under communist rule. As his fellow citizens were bamboozled by the lie of the Marxist version of pragmatism, materialism and atheism, he wrote the following in his essay "The Power of the Powerless":

If a better economic and political model is to be created, then perhaps more than ever before it must derive from profound existential and moral changes in society. This is not something that can be designed and introduced like a new car. If it is to be more than just a new variation of an old degeneration, it must above all be an expression of life in the process of transforming itself. A better system will not automatically ensure a better life. in fact, the opposite is true: only by creating a better life can a better system be developed.

From the bottom up

As Havel points out, governments are often a reflection of a society's culture — its schools, its businesses, its news media, its entertainment programs, its arts and sciences. What Havel is saying is that cultural change must precede political change.

What this means for us today is that, if we as Canadians want to change government policy, we must work at the cultural level (which includes politics). We must start at the place in our society where life is lived at its most basic and intuitive level. We must focus on the schools our children attend. We must look at what takes place in our homes. We must ask ourselves what kind of magazines we subscribe to, what movies we watch, what sermons we listen to and what agencies we support.

Above all, we must ask ourselves whether or not we are equipping ourselves and our children to penetrate the lie of democratic pragmatism, materialism and atheism.

Bob Rae is a man of his time, if perhaps a man near the "progressive" edge of his time. There's no point in crying treason when we talk about him. He's not out of step; we are.

And we must dare to stay out of step as we listen to a different drummer, one who made it very clear that "man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

BW

Poetry

Singing in the Spirit at Duchesne

They sing the way the fog clings
when the sun is finally coming through.
It's as though their souls were mirror things,
and salvation the clearest thing they do.

They are grasses whistled by the wind,
air lifting in the flowers,
the sweet loosening of minds
singing prayers with sudden power.

The words gather us between them;
they become a mountain full of choir.
There are small bells in the garden,
a sense of lungs filled with holy fire.

Frederick Zydek
Omaha, Nebraska

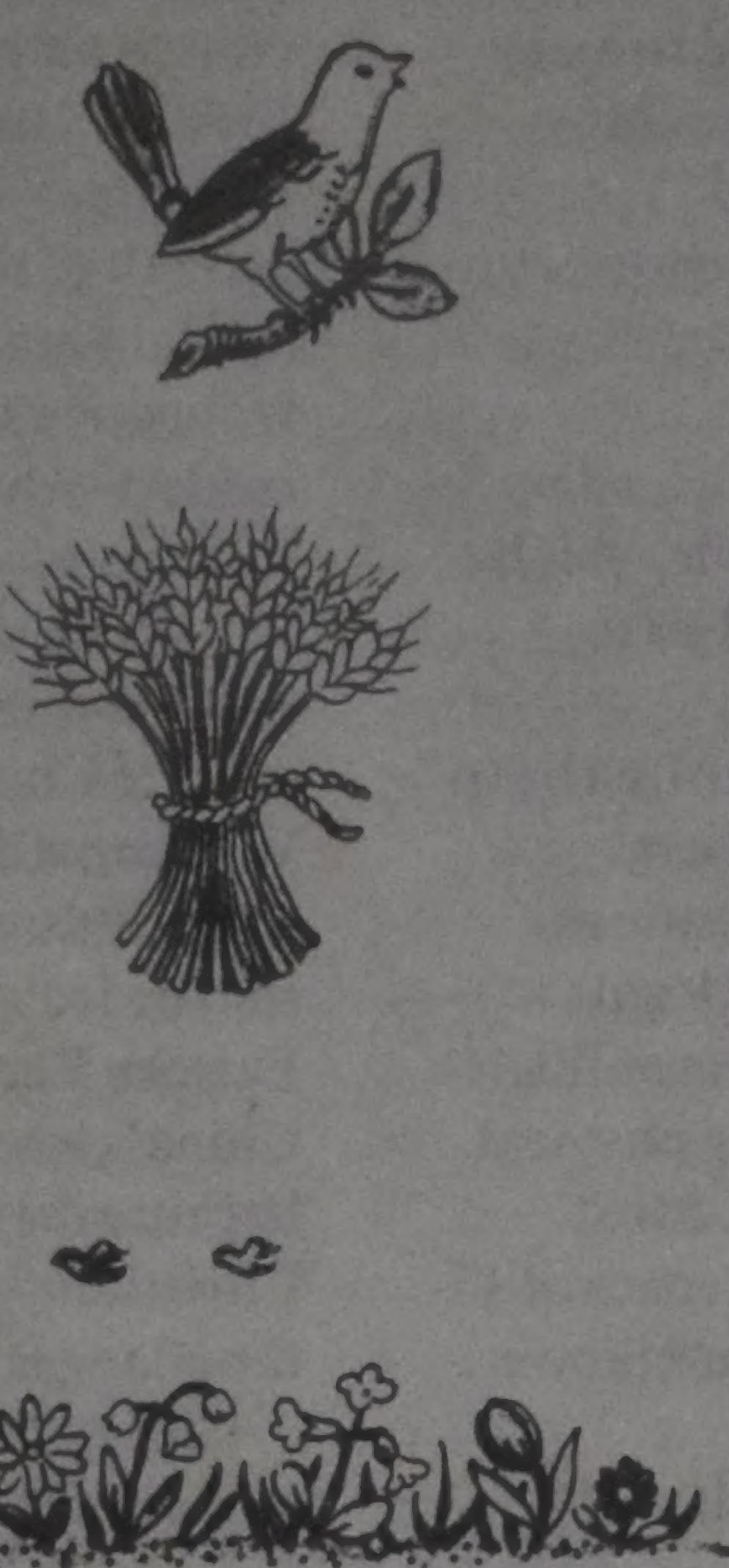


Photo: Jake Guikema.

'Take my Life ...'

Lustily joining voice to voice
hand to hand
on hymnbooks.
Volunteering life
silver, gold, love
will, heart and soul.

Words of dedication
winging lightly
from our mouths
in soprano and bass
harmonies.

Verbal patterns
cut in shapes
of deep devotion.
Ill-fitting pieces
in the shallow contours
of my heart.

Linda Siebenga
Blackfalds, Alta

Praise

Beatrice Vandervelde

It is Sunday evening. The visiting minister has just finished his sermon. A group of people, family and friends, have prepared a response.

Four young girls in white tops and long skirts, their hair coiled in the nape of their neck, bound from their seats. With big smiles on their faces they take up their position in the front of the church. An X marks the spot where each one stands.

Everyone is in position. The smiles fade. The girls lift their arms, raise their eyes upward and await their cue.

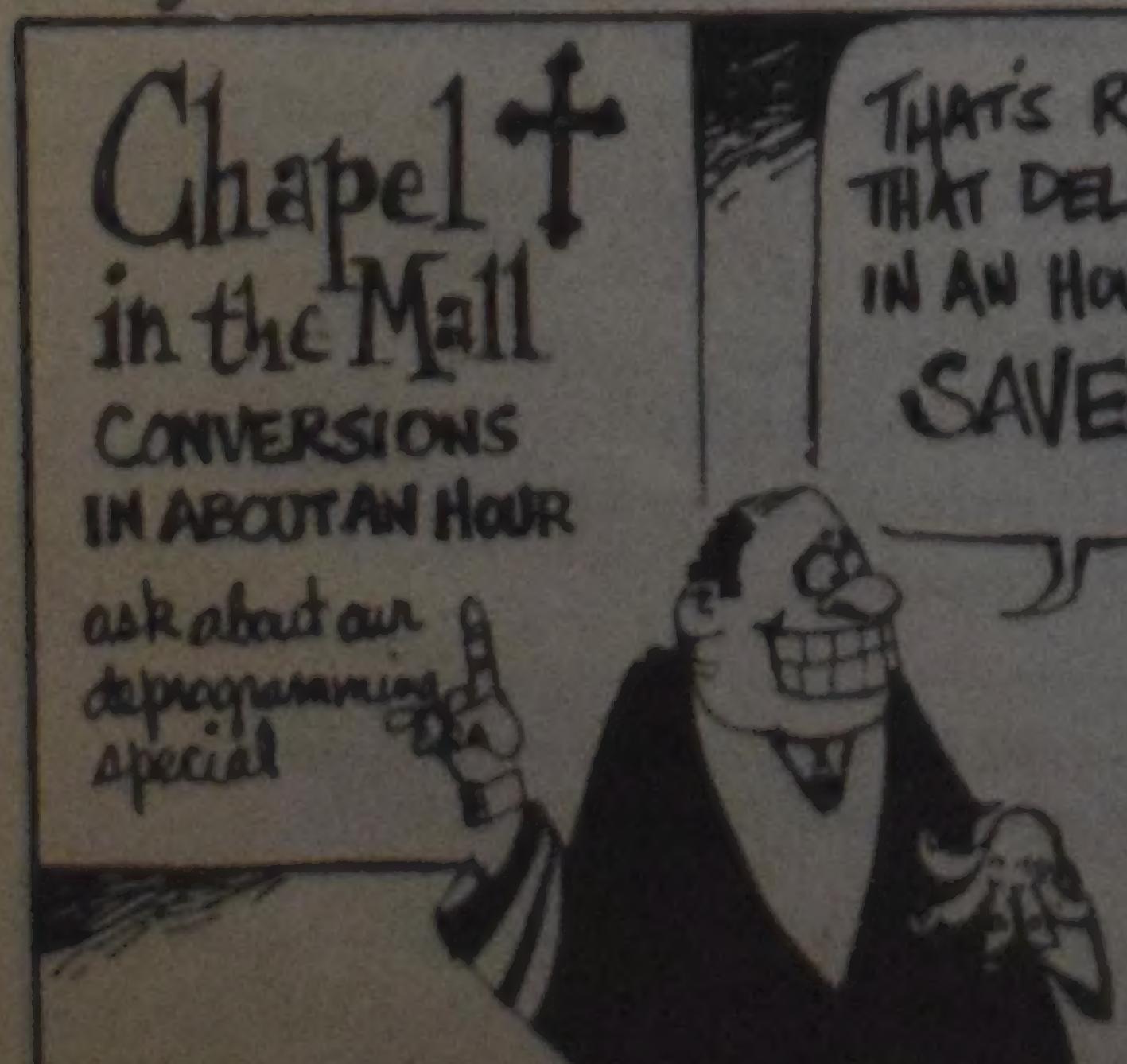
The piano plays; a husband-wife team sings a duet. The girls move, a little stiffly at first, concentrating on each step. Carefully the left hand circles. When it reaches the right elbow, both hands move on up and the lithe little bodies stretch to the right as if bringing an offering. Then they bow their heads and slowly bend their bodies. Gracefully their hands drop to the floor making a sweeping motion before they again raise them heavenward. They dip and turn and sway. They come together in the middle and move in a half-circle. From their new position they go through the same routine.

By now completely absorbed in her act of praise, one girl offers herself totally — mind, body, and soul. Her movements are no longer stiff and deliberate, but flow — smooth and effortless. She mouths the words of the song. Her face is aglow. Like a flower drawn to the sun, she dances before God's throne, basking in his love.

We are edified.

Beatrice Vandervelde is a writer and teacher living in Willowdale, Ont.

Beyond Belief



Letters

Council can axe but not suspend members

I would like to make a small correction on your report about the meetings of the Reformed Ecumenical Council in Athens. I was quoted as describing procedures about suspension in the REC Constitution.

In my interview I actually used the word *termination*. We have procedures for termination, which were duly followed, but we have no procedures for suspension. Indeed, the move by

delegates to introduce a motion for suspension was the very point at which the Dutch church delegation left the Assembly.

In other matters the report was a fair representation.

Richard L. van Houten,
General Secretary,
The Reformed Ecumenical Council,
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Avid K.K. reeder komplanes about funtestic paper

In the 28 August 1992 issue of *Kalvinist Kontakt* (K.K.) a couple of headlines escaped the editor's attention.

Being a speedreeder myself I do not nowe weather their are enny further errors in the fine print of yore illustrius paper.

Sins I don't evver make enny miskates, I feel free to korrekt yu in the aartickle fromm Maryan Venn Till on paige one, where "dissention" should be *dissension* and on paige two, where

"persistant" should bee *persistant*.

I trust that this letter may spur yu to closer editing in the future in order to avoid getting me bogged down in looking up in the dicksieonairy the unknown wruds from K.K., that I seem to find wen reeding yore headlines, preventing me from finding time to read the all importent fine print.

John van Arragon,
Hamilton, Ont.

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Chinese government 'paranoid' about growth of Christianity

BEIJING, China (EP) — An estimated 50 to 60 million people in China are professing Christians, and 80 to 85 per cent of them worship in illegal house churches, according to a report for The Bible League.

Representatives of The Bible League, a Scripture distribution agency based in South Holland, Ill., recently visited house church leaders in China, bringing with them the first shipment of Chinese Study

Bibles. This is the first Bible specifically designed to meet the preaching and teaching needs of pastors and evangelists who are on the run and in hiding.

Interviews with underground church leaders revealed the lengths to which the government will go to silence Christianity. Government police often lie to gain entry into suspects' homes, and interrogations without any kind of legal counsel drag on for months, frequently involving physical abuse and coercion. Most arrests result in sentences of 15-20 years, often in hard labour.

Beware Christianity

The church leaders believe the persecution is rooted in government paranoia. A December 1991 edition of the *South China Morning Post* reported the government's

intention to close every house church and to stop every "illegal" activity, especially activities which result in the growth of the church. A military magazine carried a front page story warning readers to beware of the "Christianity movement."

"The central government is more aware of changes outside China [since the Berlin Wall came down]" said church leader Pastor George. George said he feels the changes in Eastern Europe have caused China's leaders to panic, because they believe Christianity is the reason for the changes in those countries.

Christians in China are amused that the great political movement known as communism should virtually admit it feels threatened by a movement made up largely of peasants and farmers. Yet they agree that communists have

every reason to be afraid. "We believe 'the King's heart is in the Lord's hand,'" said one pastor who asked to remain anonymous. He said he never dreamed that Russia and Eastern Europe would change, but they did, and God is able to change China, too. "We hope [the] door to [the] Gospel [will] open wider and wider," he said.

As the largest supplier of Bibles to the underground church in China, The Bible League has supplied nearly three million since 1978.

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Persecution in Nigeria being turned to good

WHEATON, Ill. (WEF) — The frequent violence against Christians in northern Nigeria by Muslim fundamentalists has challenged Christians towards purity of life and sincere dedication says Panya Baba, president of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA).

Addressing more than 1,500 delegates at the Korean World Mission conference in Wheaton, Ill., held in late July, Baba said though at least 200 Christians were killed in the May riots, the international Christian community has to be careful what they pray about the persecution of Christians in Nigeria.

"I do not think I can dare ask you to pray that persecution stop," said Baba, whose denomination lost about 200 church buildings through fires

started by Muslim groups last year.

A difficult blessing

"All these problems have become a blessing. We are experiencing a practical cleansing of the church through persecution," said Baba. The churches are growing and Christian people are getting more serious with their faith.

The leader of one of the biggest evangelical groups in Africa's most populous state said that what Christians need is love and boldness in order to face the challenges in the country and in the continent.

"We cannot think about Africa without shedding tears," said Baba, adding that "Africa is a land experiencing many crises."



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Do written rules change behaviour?

In the past years I have been involved at different times with committees trying to draft policies that will define what it means to live a Christian lifestyle. Implicit in the perceived need for such policies is the belief that written rules will change the conduct of those who belong to the organization which drafts such policies. Whether such policies do, in fact, change anyone's lifestyle may be a worthwhile point to ponder.

Sometimes the whole exercise of policy drafting reminds me of the college I attend, which had a detailed conduct policy. When one of our college seniors found herself prematurely pregnant and subsequently married the father of her child, they were awakened one morning by a call from the dean of women. She wanted to know whether it was true that this woman had been pregnant before marriage and when this was confirmed she vehemently stated, "But we have a policy forbidding such behaviour, you know!"

We keep ignoring them

As such, policies do not change the present conduct of people. We hear the Ten Commandments regularly from our pulpits and yet we continue to lust, covet, desecrate the Sabbath and God's name, fail to show respect to our parents, cheat on our taxes and commit a host of other "little" sins. Maybe the problem

with rules and policies can be traced to the lack of attention we pay to the commandment in Deut. 6: 6-9 where we are admonished "to impress them on our children," "to bind them upon our heart," "to tie them as symbols on our hands and foreheads." Rules and regulations need to be embodied, to be acted upon, to be modelled by others for their young from the very beginning. The "do as I say but not as I do" message which some parents relay to their children is as counter-effective as the written rule that is not embodied.

What policy-making does do for any organization and institution is to provide the means to exclude those who cannot agree to the policy upon membership, and to place under censure those who violate the policy. In other words, policy-making constitutes a disciplinary manoeuvre, no more and no less. It does make me wonder how many people would have followed Christ if, before he allowed them to walk in the dust of his tracks, he had demanded their acceptance of his policies. Christ modelled an inclusiveness, integrity, consistency, and forgiveness that ought to affect our lifestyles much more than any given written rule of conduct.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is assistant professor of education and psychology at The King's College in Edmonton.

Music/Media

Trans World Radio signs religious broadcasting contract with Albania

TIRANA, Albania (TWR) — An international Gospel broadcasting network, Trans World Radio (TWR), has reached an agreement to begin broadcasting from Radio Tirana in the capital city of Albania. Dr. Paul E. Freed, president of TWR, signed the agreement in Tirana on Aug. 20, 1992. The agreement gives TWR exclusive rights for Protestant religious broadcasting on Albania's powerful transmitters formerly used to broadcast communist ideology around the world. This is the first contract that Radio Tirana has ever signed with an external corporation.

TWR will utilize one million watts of power to broadcast Gospel programming to countries such as Bulgaria,

Romania, the Czech and Slovak republics, the former Yugoslavia, Hungary, Ukraine, Turkey and Russia. This development marks the first time TWR will be able to reach many of these countries with extremely powerful AM transmission rather than shortwave. The contract, which runs from October 1992 through December 1994 and is automatically renewable, gives TWR exclusive use of three prime time hours per day, from 9:00 p.m. to midnight, local time.

Religion banned for 40 years

Albania, officially declared to be an atheistic state in 1967 by dictator Enver Hoxha, had constitutionally banned all

religious observances. The communist government then destroyed an estimated 95 per cent of the country's mosques and churches. For 40 years, Radio Tirana, broadcasting in as many as 23 languages, has been one of the most effective outlets for communist propaganda.

Albania's new democratic president, Mr. Sali Berisha, elected in March, recently commented on his affirmation of religious freedom and his invitation for the clergy to join him in rebuilding the country. "I asked them because I am convinced that some of our (economic and social problems) are due to atheistic attitudes which were imposed upon us," he said.

TWR president Paul E.

Freed, who signed the contract with Mr. Skender Bucpapaj, general director of Radio Tirana, commented on this historic event for TWR: "It is a beautiful irony that the same Radio Tirana that broadcast the 1967 announcement declaring Albania an atheistic nation will now be used to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ for three hours every night. TWR plans to use this unprecedented opportunity and this clear and powerful 1,000,000-watt AM signal to reach as many as 100 million people with spiritually uplifting radio programs. Humanly speaking, Albania was the most unlikely place on earth for such an opportunity."

The Radio Tirana installation will be the eighth major transmission location

used by TWR, with other transmission sites located in Monte Carlo, Bonaire, Uruguay, Cyprus, Guam, Sri Lanka, and Swaziland. Worldwide, TWR broadcasts over 1,000 hours of Gospel programming each week in 90 languages and can reach 80 per cent of the earth's surface with its transmitters. Founded by Freed in 1952 using a small radio station in Tangier, Morocco, TWR now utilizes six-and-one-half million watts of transmitter power, making it the largest missionary broadcasting network in the world. A worldwide staff of 900 works at the transmitter sites, studios and offices in over 30 nations.

Bernardi's Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra a source of national pride

(Canadian Scene) — On November 2 the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra will begin its first international concert tour. Known as "The Pipeline Tour," the trip will be sponsored by Western Canada's natural gas industry. The orchestra will play in Canadian and American cities served by Canadian gas pipelines as well as in Washington, D.C., Ottawa and Toronto.

The tour will begin just after the opening of Mario Bernardi's ninth season as music director of the Calgary Philharmonic. Under his guidance the orchestra has grown into what William Littler, music critic of the *Toronto Star* calls "a point of national pride." Bernardi is the most recorded Canadian conductor, an orchestra spokesperson claims. Unlike the orchestra, he is no stranger to performing internationally, having conducted throughout the United States, Europe, the former Soviet Union and Mexico.

Educated in war-time Italy

Bernardi was born of Italian parentage in 1930 in Kirkland Lake, a Northern Ontario mining town, where his father was a blacksmith. Bernardi Senior was eager to have his children educated in Italy and together with their mother, Mario Bernardi and his brother and sister left Canada. The coming of the Second World War saw the Bernards unable to return to the safety of Canada. They were living with relatives in Treviso, not far from Venice. From 1943 on, the city was under frequent Allied bombardment, but

Mario Bernardi's dedication to music compensated for the hardships and dangers.

When his mother and siblings returned to Canada Bernardi remained in Italy because he was already enrolled as a student at the Venice Conservatory where he studied piano. In 1947 he graduated at the top of his class. He then returned to Canada, in spite of the misgivings of his professor who told him he'd be returning to a "musical desert."

Back in Canada, Bernardi continued his studies at Toronto's Royal Conservatory. His Italian heritage drew him naturally to opera and it was in this field that Bernardi first gained an international reputation. He made his operatic debut conducting the Canadian Opera Company's production of *Hansel and Gretel* and by 1963 had been invited to conduct at the prestigious English National Opera. In 1966 he became music director of the opera.

Three years later Bernardi moved to Ottawa to become the founding music director of the National Arts Centre Orchestra which he led for 13 years. For his contribution to Canadian music he was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada in 1972.

Vancouver too

Bernardi is also principal conductor of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and with both this orchestra and the Calgary Philharmonic he has made numerous recordings for CBC Records, including the complete symphonies of Robert Schumann with the Philharmonic. One of his latest releases features the

magnificent organ built for Calgary by the Casavant family of St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, who are among the world's most renowned organ makers.

Titled *Patrick Wedd, Organ*, the recording features the Canadian organist of that name, playing with the orchestra under Bernardi's direction. Three works are featured, Belgian composer Joseph Jongen's *Symphonie Concertante*, Canadian Jean Coulthard's *Music to St. Cecilia* and from France, Francois Poulenc's *Concerto in G Minor*. Calgary's Jack Fisher Hall, built in 1985 for the orchestra, has splendid acoustics and this recording with its superb sound reflects the excitement that Bernardi can create with his musicians.

Bernardi is equally at home with Bach, whose *Brandenburg Concerti* he has recorded; and with Bartok, whose *Piano Concerto No. 3* is to be released shortly. Pianist Jane Coop is the soloist and the recording will also feature Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No. 1* and Forsyth's *Piano Concerto*.

Canadians are gradually beginning to learn that their country has some great musicians, Bernardi among them.

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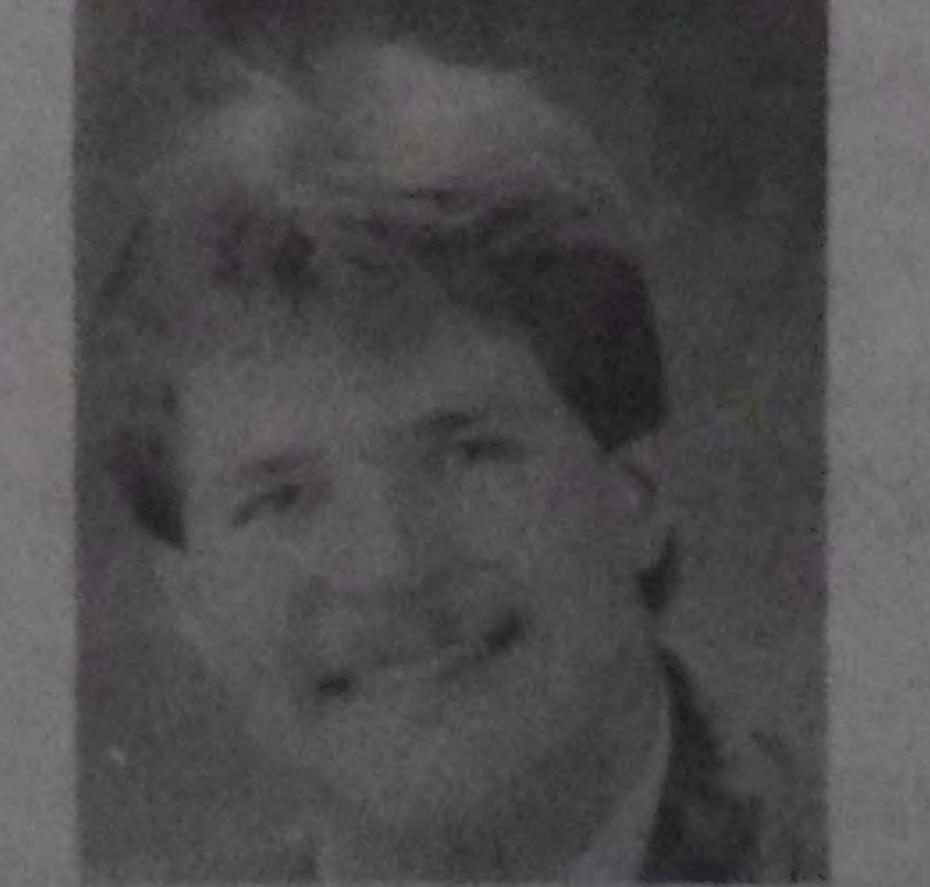
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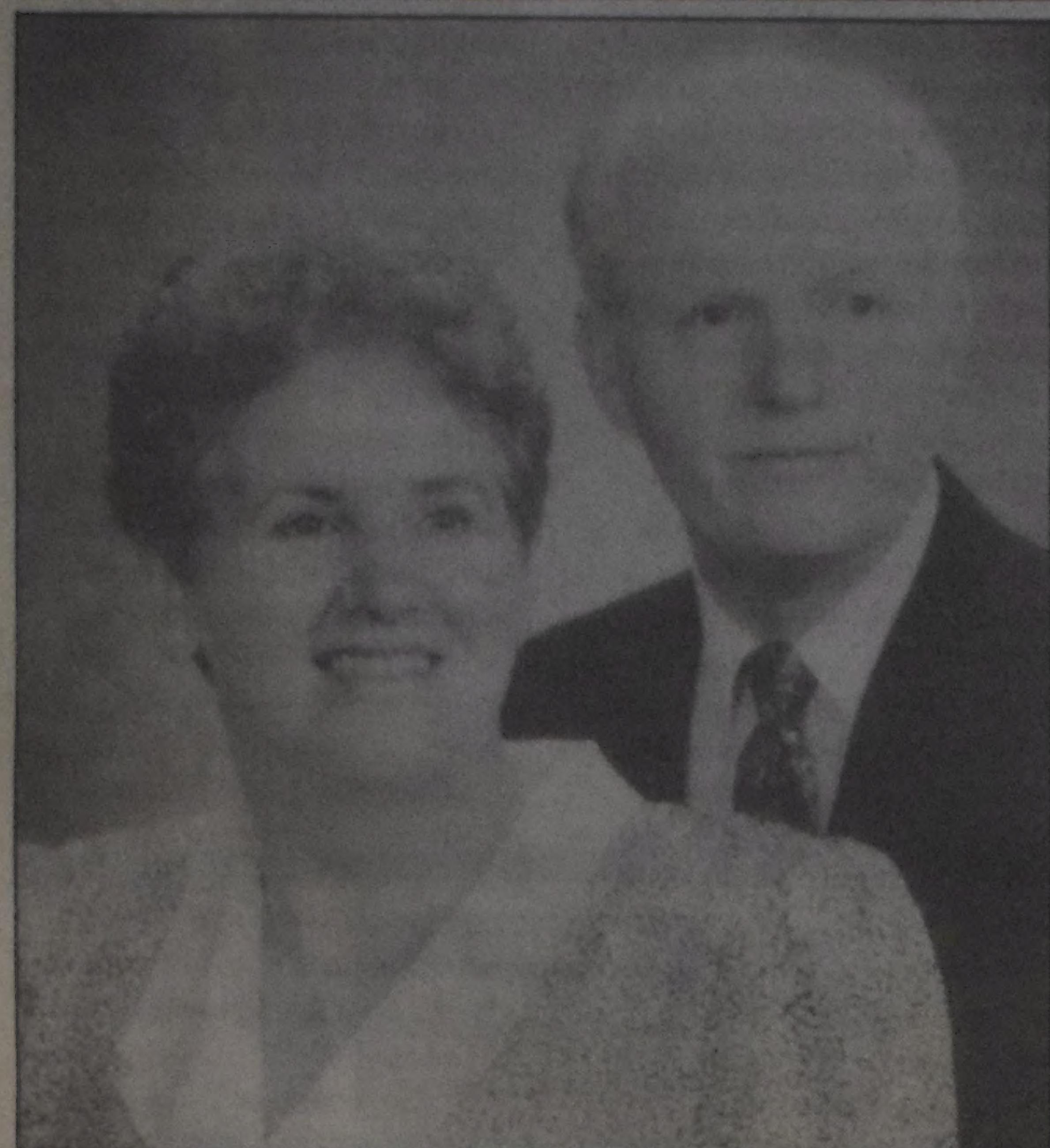
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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

New Canadian missionaries prepared for the world

Having completed four weeks of orientation this fall at the Grand Rapids, Mich., offices of Christian Reformed World Missions, 29 missionaries are now destined for assignments in 12 different countries. Profiled below are six Canadians from the group.



Ken and Sally Vanderwal.

Ken and Sally Vanderwal are moving from a masonry business to missionary service and look forward to laying spiritual foundations as church developers in Latin America. Ken and Sally ran a masonry business in Bellflower, Calif., until 1978, when they felt God calling them to full-time Christian ministry.

From Ontario to Costa Rica

After Ken graduated from Calvin College and Seminary in 1984, the Vanderwals accepted a call to pastor Blenheim (Ont.) Christian Reformed Church.

"By God's grace we have been a source of blessing to Blenheim CRC for the past

seven years," Ken and Sally say. "But for some time now we have felt the Lord has been nudging us in the direction of foreign missions." The Vanderwals will move next to Costa Rica for language study before beginning their church-developing assignment in Central America.

To French-speaking West-Africa

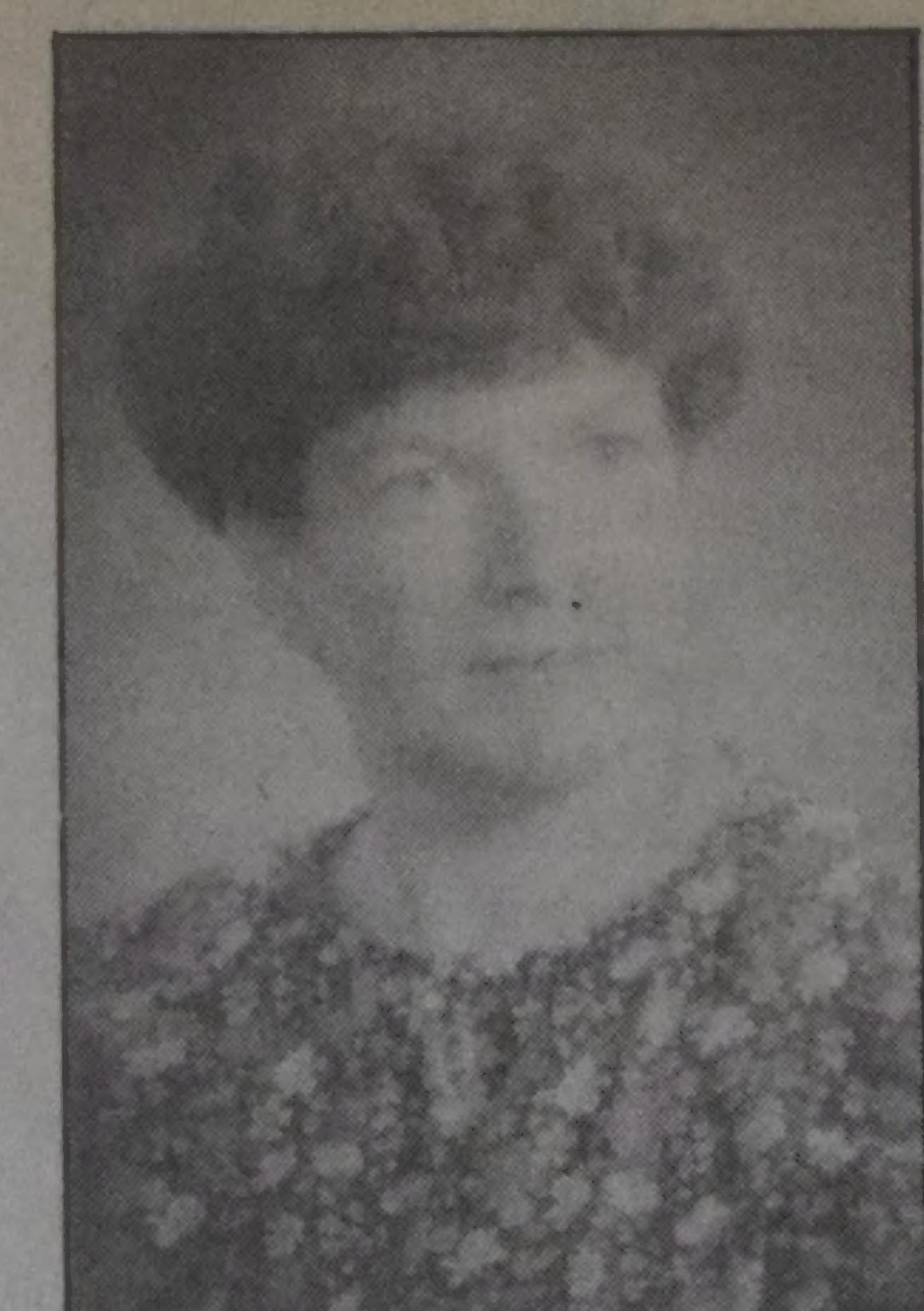
Greg and Nelly Sinclair were studying French in Quebec when God opened their eyes to the need for Christian witness in French-speaking West Africa. Greg and Nelly, both graduates of the University of Manitoba, went to study French together at the

Laval University in Quebec after their marriage in 1988. Before coming to World Missions, the Sinclairs served as directors of community and discipleship in Project S.O.W. (Serving in Our World), a ministry to young people in the CRC. This experience in discipleship and sharing their faith helped focus Greg and Nelly's vision for witness to the Fulbe people in Mali, West Africa. Greg and Nelly will move to Mali next spring, where their assignment will include translating Bible-study materials into the Fulfulde language.

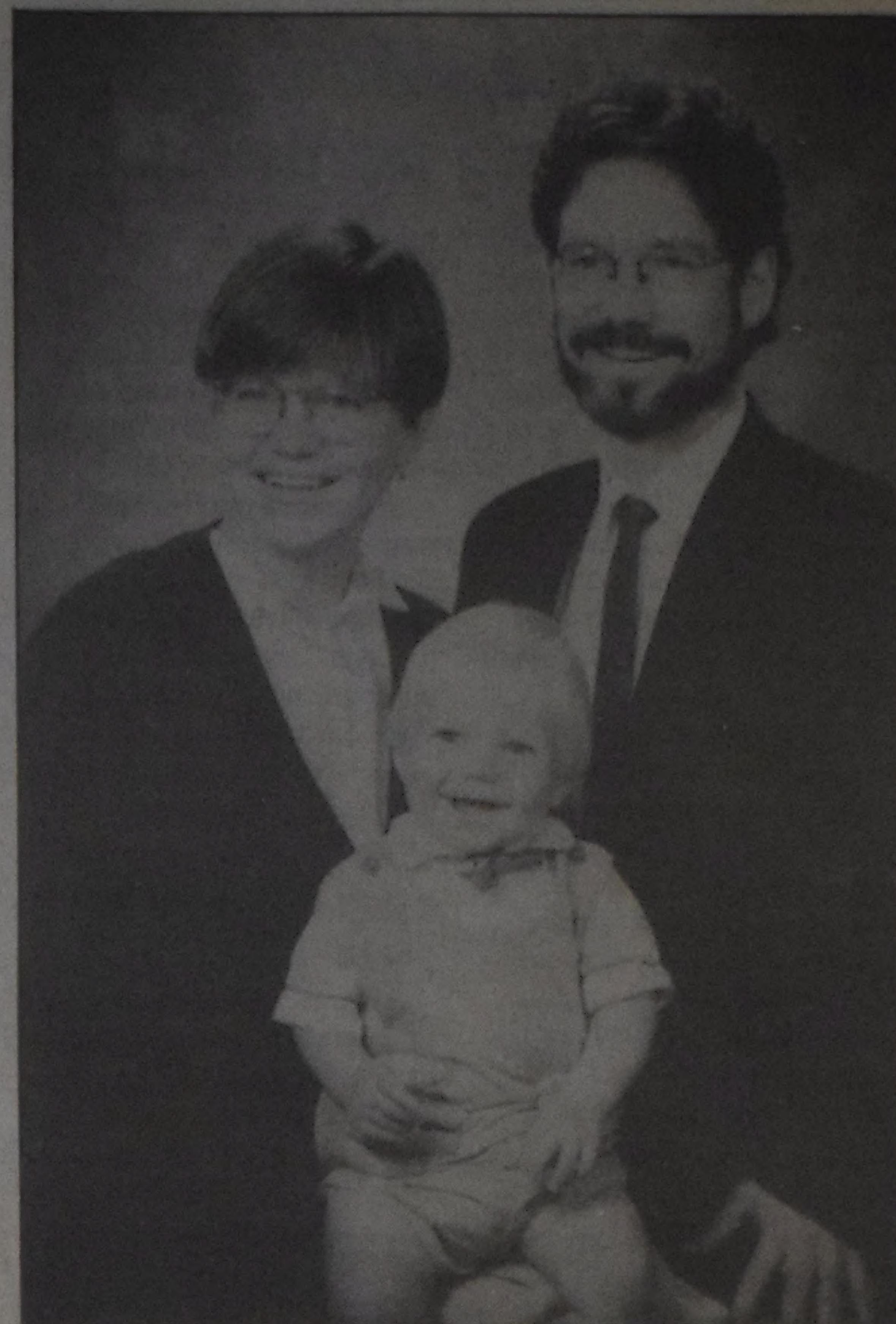
Teaching in Haiti

Trudy Jager wanted to be a teacher for as long as she can remember. After receiving her bachelor of education degree from the University of Alberta in 1974, she taught in Chateh, Alta., on an Indian reserve for four years. She spent the next 13 years with Haney-Pitt Christian School in Maple Ridge, B.C. It was several years ago that she first gave serious thought to teaching outside of Canada, when she spent two weeks with a mission group in Haiti.

She will now leave her position as a teacher and curriculum co-ordinator at



Trudy Jager.



Greg and Nelly Sinclair and son.

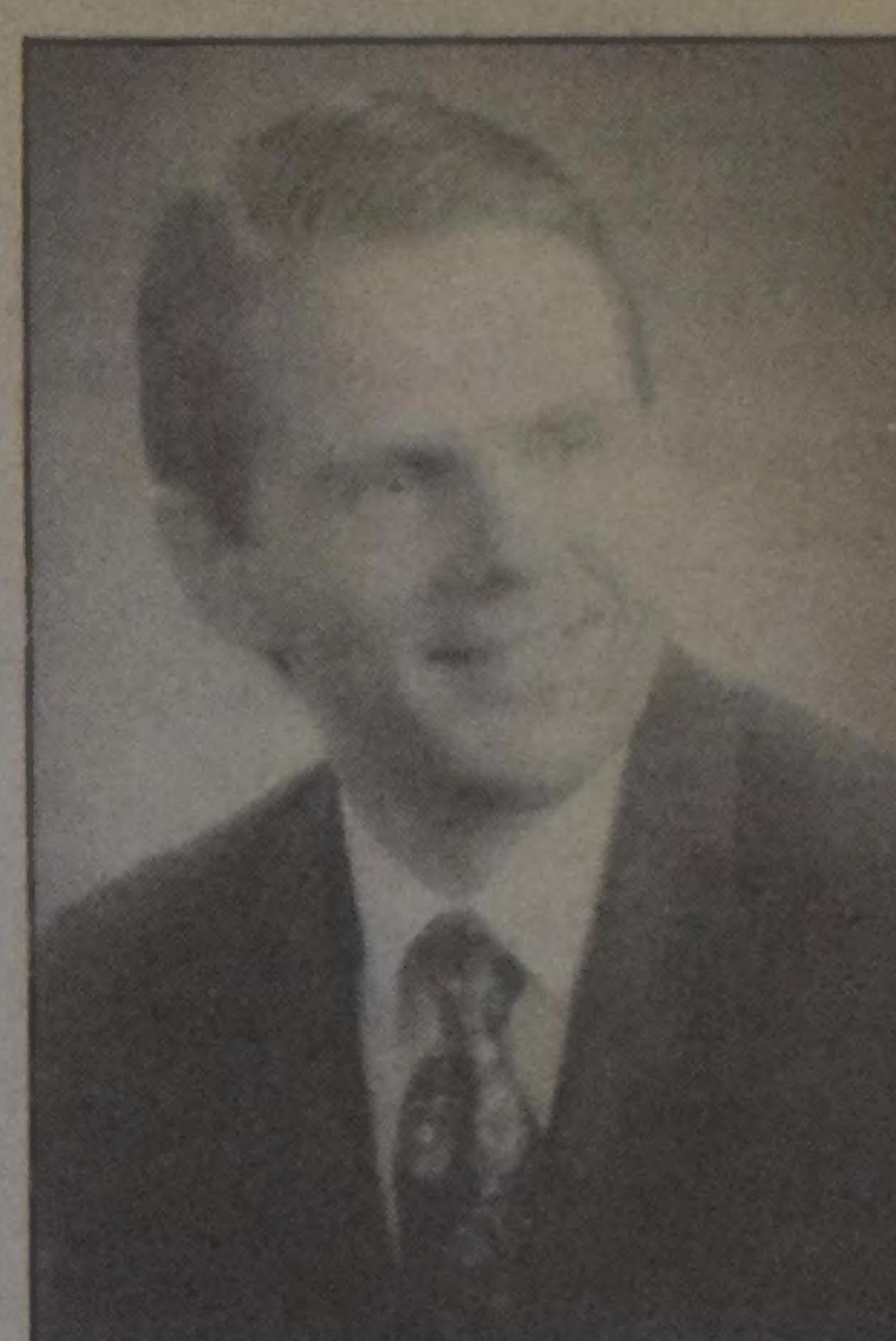
Photos courtesy Chr. Ref. World Missions

John Knox Christian School in Woodstock, Ont., to take an assignment with World Missions as an education consultant in the Dominican Republic, Haiti's neighbour.

'Juan Calvino' in Mexico

Alan Vanderwoerd has already built a resume of accomplishments in mission work. The 1979 graduate of Dordt College, with master's degrees in divinity and theology from Regent College in Vancouver, spent his summers between classes working in campus chaplaincy and a ministry to seafarers. He has also been involved in the planning of Hope Community CRC and has preached at Vancouver area CRCs for the past several years. On a short-term assignment with World Missions, he taught for one

semester in 1991 at Smith Bible College in Baissa, Nigeria, an experience that gave him a good taste of cross-cultural ministry. He will teach at Juan Calvino Seminary in Mexico City in addition to developing churches.



Alan Vanderwoerd.

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Cult mass suicide prevented in northeastern China

Andrew Wark

HONG KONG (NNI) — Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials in the northeastern Chinese province of Liaoning narrowly prevented more than 100 members of a Christian-oriented cult from committing mass suicide July 15, according to a recently published report.

The cult members, believed to be from the rural village of Gushan, had reportedly been instructed by their spiritual leader that the end of the world was near and that they would be assured immediate passage to heaven if they committed suicide. According to a report

in the *People's Public Security News*, the group had gathered together in a house shortly before sunrise, in preparation for jumping *en masse* off a nearby cliff.

Police raided the meeting while members were eating their "last meal" and presented the believers with "on-the-spot" propaganda and education.

"After that, the majority of the Christians came to know they had been deceived by the preacher," the newspaper reported. "They thanked the party and the government for giving them a second chance at

life and went home."

According to a Reuters news agency report, it is still not known if PSB officials have arrested the cult leader responsible for instigating the near-tragedy.

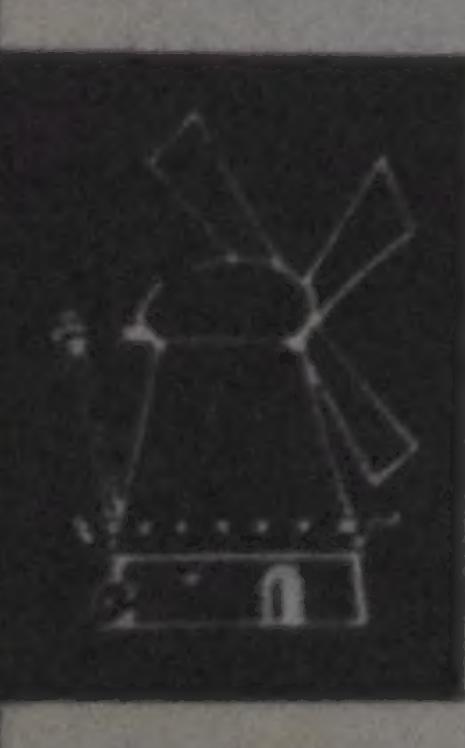
Chinese church leaders speaking to NNI claim that Christian cultic activities throughout the country are on the increase. The leaders blame the growth of heretical groups on a lack of Bibles and Christian literature, poor theological training and high levels of illiteracy among rural church members.

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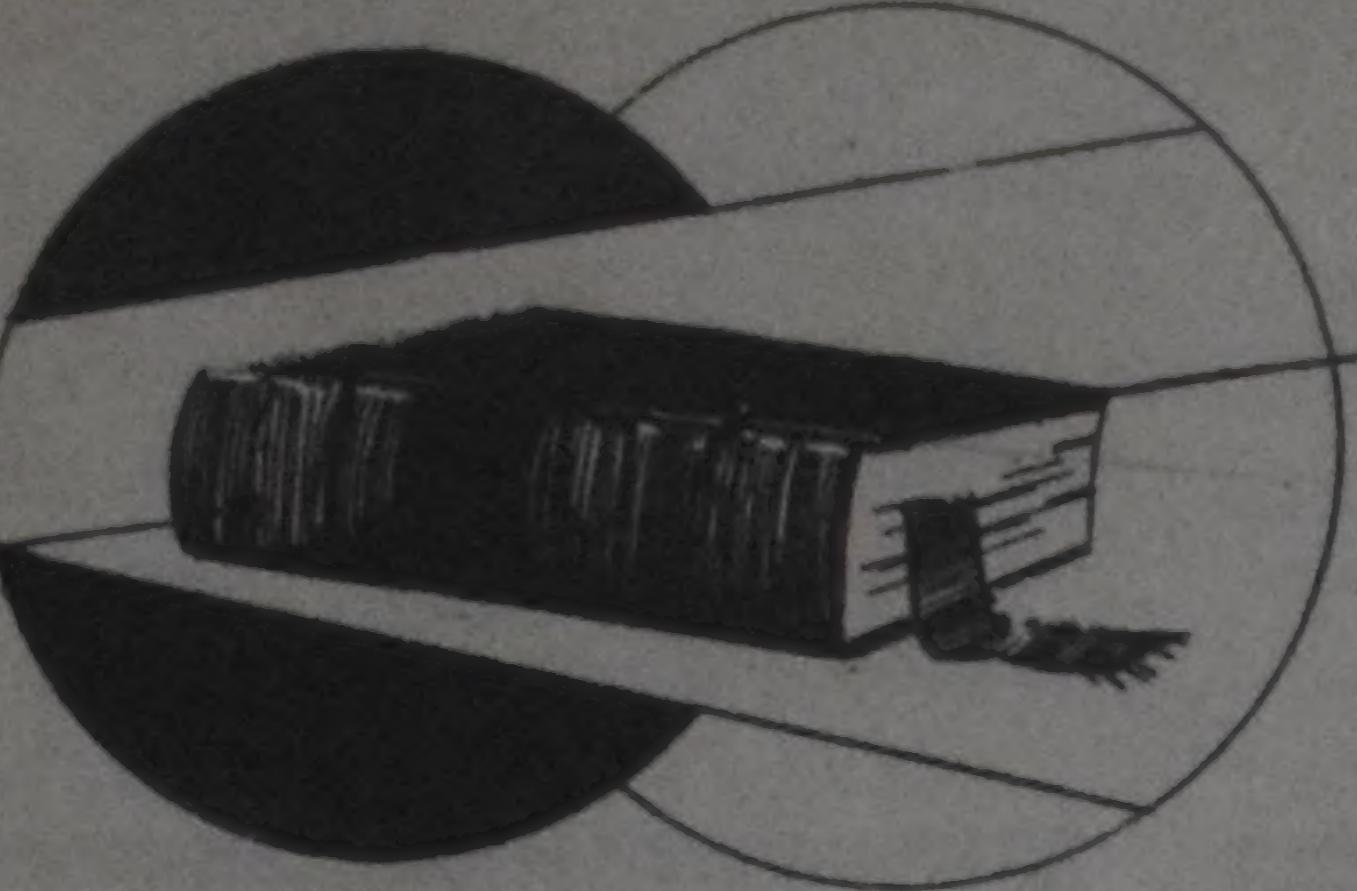
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Society

Bible Notebook

Al Wolters



'Son of the Most High'

"You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High" (Luke 1: 31-32, NIV).

The story of the Annunciation — the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she is to give birth to the long-awaited Messiah — is a familiar one. Even if we did not know it from our regular Bible reading, the story would be well-known simply because of its association with Christmas in our culture. Many of us know these familiar words so well that we can recite them from memory. We all know that the person of whom it is said that he "will be called the Son of the Most High" is none other than Jesus Christ. It is clear that "Son of the Most High" is a Messianic title which properly belongs to him — at least if we believe the words of the angel Gabriel.

Given the familiarity of these words and their intimate connection with the person of Jesus Christ, it is perhaps not surprising that a great deal of interest was aroused by the discovery that a fragment from one of the Dead Sea Scrolls used exactly the same expression to refer to a figure who also seems to have Messianic features.

In a document known to scholars as 4Q246 (which means that it is number 246 of the ancient parchment fragments found in Cave 4 near Qumran in the Judean desert) there is a line which reads: "He will be called the Son of God, and they will name him the Son of the Most High."

Unfortunately the fragment in which these words appear (like many of the Qumran fragments) is quite short, and the surrounding writing is damaged and illegible in a number of places. Nevertheless, it is clear that the document seems to be about a future Messianic figure with the titles "Son of God" and "Son of the Most High."

The parallel with Luke 1: 31-32 is quite striking, especially when we consider the fact that the Qumran document is older than the New Testament and is written in Aramaic, which is no doubt also the language spoken by Gabriel to Mary.

Apparently Gabriel used an Aramaic phrase which was already current among the Jews as a title for the expected Messiah, and which Luke records for us in Greek. All of this makes for an interesting historical and linguistic sidelight on the familiar words of the Annunciation.

Sensationally wrong

Given this background, imagine my surprise at a recent front page story in the *Toronto Star* (Sept. 1, 1992). The headline proclaims: "Dead Sea scroll refers to earlier 'Son of God,'" and the story begins with the sensational claim that "a fragment of ancient text from the Dead Sea Scrolls challenges the fundamental belief that Jesus was the unique Son of God."

The story then goes on to state that this text was long kept secret by scholars, who were "perhaps fearful that the scrolls would shake Christian belief," but that it has now at long last been published by Oxford professor Geza Vermes.

All of this is complete nonsense — or rather, it is a sensationalized distortion of the true facts. It is true that 4Q246 has only recently been published in full, but the supposedly revolutionary point about the Messianic title has been known and published since 1972 (you will find it referred to in any good recent commentary on Luke).

I myself have had a photograph of the original in my possession for some time. It is mere sensationalism to suggest that the relevant words have been kept secret, or that they challenge some basic Christian belief, or that "they present a dilemma for Christian dogmatists" (as the *Star* puts it). Is there anything surprising about the fact that the New Testament applies to Jesus a title which contemporary Jews considered Messianic? That is precisely what the Christian believer would expect.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Lack of prayer a hindrance to evangelism

WATERLOO, Ont. (Vision 2000) — A survey of nearly 1000 church leaders across the country reveals some significant patterns in attitudes towards evangelism.

"Listening to the Heartbeat of Canada's Church Leadership," prepared by Vision 2000 Canada, asked pastors what they saw as hindrances to effective church evangelism, what kinds of methods they used to evangelize, and other priorities.

More than three-quarters of those who responded cited lack of prayer as the greatest hindrance, followed by lack of motivation and lack of vision. Those figures do not surprise Eric Stolte, on staff with the Navigators in Saskatoon. Stolte was instrumental in establishing regular prayer meetings among Christian leaders there, and organized a "Pastors' Prayer Summit" a few months ago. Since prayer for the city has become a priority, leaders have noticed an increased response in individual ministries of evangelism.

"The lack of prayer is clearly evident as I travel across the country," adds Bill McRae, chancellor of Ontario Bible College/Ontario Theological Seminary and chairperson of Vision 2000 Canada. But he says he is "very hopeful, very optimistic and very impressed" with the way prayer is seen as a priority in some places. "There really is a significant resurgence of prayer."

Don Moore, executive director of Vision 2000 Canada, has also seen encouraging signs of prayer in action. "My observation has been that currently across Canada, we're experiencing a widespread, informal network of praying beginning to take place."

Disunity also a factor

Both McRae and Stolte also add disunity as a factor hindering evangelism. "We bring a Gospel of reconciliation, when in fact, we are not reconciled ourselves," says Stolte. On the positive side of that coin, he says unity is becoming evident in Saskatoon. "One of the pastors was saying we're not really pastors and churches; we're associate pastors of one church. That's miraculous."

Queried on the methods used to evangelize, nearly 86 per cent of pastors responded that regular church services are the primary means of evangelism, followed by personal evangelism (82.1 per cent), and special events (77.2 per cent).

But often these methods

cannot be divorced from each other, comments David Macfarlane, senior pastor of Islington Evangel Centre in Toronto. "Our experience here with personal evangelism is that it is the bridge that brings people to church," he explains.

But McRae is uncertain of the value of church services as the primary means to evangelize. If church services are being used for evangelism, he points out, they must be "user-friendly," that is, geared to those who are not Christians.

Must meet needs

"I think we know the traffic of life is not coming in the front door of the church," adds Don Posterski, who heads World Vision of Canada's domestic ministries.

After spending many years with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Posterski sees relationships as a vital part of any process. "We know what produces the fruit of evangelism: It comes out of relationship and it comes out of serving people's needs in crisis and giving them a safe place to seek the spiritual."

Pastors surveyed were also asked about the means that may help stimulate involvement and commitment to evangelism. A majority (75.8 per cent) listed effective models, followed by training seminars for church evangelism (75.3 per cent) and training seminars for

community outreach (71.5 per cent). But even good models can only do part of the job, according to some Christian leaders. Models must deal with the barriers cited earlier, points out Glenn Smith, Executive Director of Christian Direction in Montreal. Ken Driedger, pastor of Portage Alliance Church in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, adds that models are important but can only be effective if the motivation is there.

Training, listed by three-quarters of pastors as an important means to stimulate commitment to evangelism, also elicits scepticism from a few leaders. Smith notes that numerous training seminars and conferences have been created already. McRae, however, says there should be an emphasis on training. "My fear is that we have not done an adequate job of training people in personal evangelism."

Malcolm Beckett, Director of Evangelism for the Atlantic United Baptist Convention, gives a qualified response to the request for training. The problem with training seminars, he points out, is that after they're over, people forget about them. He suggests a six-week follow-up, but, he adds, "the motivation has to be there first."

Fewer than half (43.1 per cent) of the pastors responding said they have a defined strategy for evangelism.

United Church elects Cree moderator

Bill Fledderus

FREDERICTON — Stanley McKay, a Cree pastor from Manitoba, was recently elected and installed as the head of the United Church of Canada.

"As an aboriginal Christian I've developed certain ways of seeing the world and life. I believe [church officials, United Church members and aboriginal peoples] have gifts to share," McKay said recently in an interview with Rene Pollett of *The Winnipeg Sun*.

In his two-year term McKay hopes to concentrate on "the question of my people in the nation and in the wider context, the pressures on the poor, abuse and violence against the weak and marginalized

people," he said in another interview with Gerald Flood of *The Winnipeg Free Press*.

Friends describe McKay as a humble man who incorporates traditional Native values such as conciliation and respect for nature into his Christianity, according to Flood.

McKay, 50, is a native of Fisher River, 180 km north of Winnipeg. He now resides in Beausejour, Man., where he heads a Native seminary called the Jessie Saulteaux Centre.

McKay's installation ceremony featured the burning of sweetgrass, a Cree hymn and the presentation of a traditional Native talking stick, according to Canadian Press news services.

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Feature

Vincent Van Gogh as evangelist

*Walking again through the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, I paused in front of the painting with the snuffed-out candle, the old Bible, and the little yellow book by Emile Zola, *La Joie de Vivre* (The Joy of Living). Through headphones we heard the commentator say: "In this painting, you can see how Vincent broke with his religious past [the candle is burnt out] and turned to the modern, joyous life of late 19th-century France — *joie de vivre!*!"*

Gabe Riens

Was the commentator right, I wondered? I studied Van Gogh's paintings once again and became absorbed in his letters.

Born in 1853, Vincent Van Gogh was a son of the manse; his father was a Reformed minister in the southern part of the Netherlands. At 16 Vincent left home and worked at the famous art galleries of Goupil.

poor and the wretched?

The journey begins

And so, at 23, his long spiritual journey began. Alone in his room in Paris he studied his Bible fanatically. He applied for a teaching position, though his real dream was to become a preacher like his father. He received an appointment at Isleworth, near London, at the Methodist school of a Rev. Mr. Jones.

When Mr. Jones asked him to preach, he wrote his brother: "Theo, your brother has preached for the first time. What a delightful thought that in the future wherever I go, I will preach the Gospel: to do that well, one must have the Gospel in one's heart. May the Lord give it to me."

Back in Holland, he prepared to enter university. His studies in Greek and Latin were sheer torture. "Mendes Da Costa [his teacher], do you seriously believe that such horrors are indispensable to a man who wants to do what I want to do, give peace to poor creatures and reconcile them to their existence here on earth?"

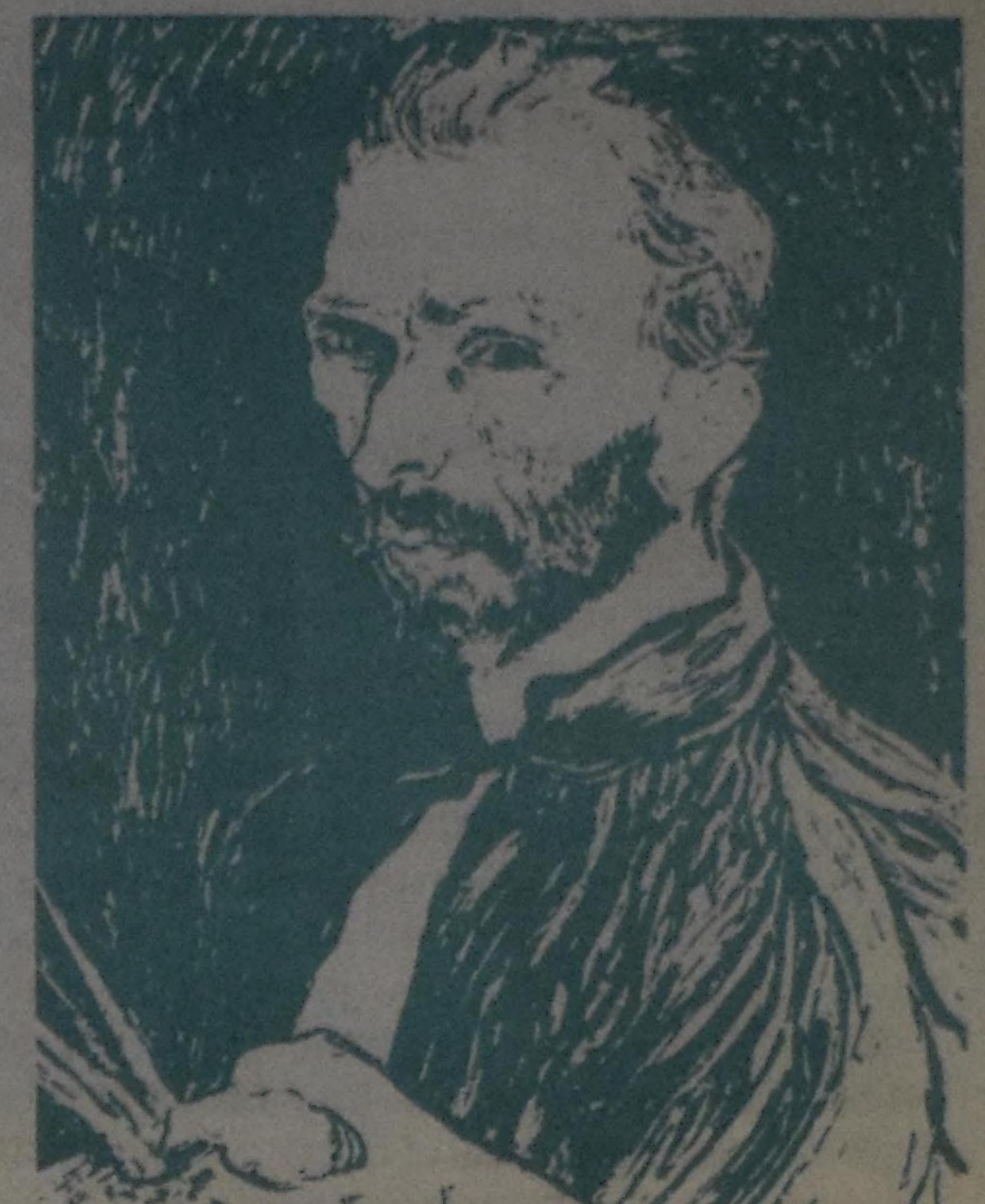
Love doesn't matter, speech does

After a year he quit. Following a short course on evangelism in Brussels, he went

as an evangelist to the Borinage under the auspices of the Union des Eglises Protestants de Belgique.

The Borinage was a mining district in the southern part of Belgium. Vincent became poorer than the poorest miner. During a terrible explosion, he cut up the last remnants of his linen to dress the burns of the wounded.

After six months the Comite d'Evangelisation evaluated his work. The verdict was clear: "Dear Mr.



Vincent Van Gogh, *Self Portrait*, 1889.

Van Gogh. If besides the admirable qualities you have shown, helping the sick and the wounded, your willingness to make sacrifices, you also had possessed the gift of speech, then, Mr. Van Gogh, you would have been an accomplished evangelist. Lacking, however, this most important requirement, your putting the teaching of Christ into practice literally has little to do with love of the neighbour; on the contrary it becomes a form of pride. For that reason the Comite has decided not to give you a permanent appointment. With feelings of respect and in the name of Jesus Christ"

Who's the true Christian

Nevertheless Vincent kept working among the miners. After two years he left the Borinage. Barefoot in the autumn chill, his small bundle of possessions on his shoulder, he poured out his heart: "Nobody understood me. They think I'm a madman because I want to be a true Christian. They turned me out like a

It is not shameful to break down under sorrow. But under pleasure it is.

Blaise Pascal.

dog, saying that I was causing a scandal because I tried to relieve the misery of the wretched. I don't know what I am going to do. Perhaps they are right and I am idle and useless on earth."

And yet, Vincent did not give up. "Theo, even in that deep misery I felt my energy revive and I said to myself: I am taking up my pencil again, I am putting myself to drawing again, and since then every thing for me has changed."

It sounds like a cry of victory. But at 27, he had only 10 years to live.

Compassionate preaching through art

This was a turning point — his "conversion" to art. But was this, at the same time, a turning away from his religious past? Or do we still recognize in his art his compassion for the poor and his love of Christ and the Gospel? Did he remain an evangelist, no longer as a preacher but as a painter? Let us look at some of his works and listen to some of his letters.

Already in the Borinage he had begun to make drawings of the miners. "I should be happy if some day



The Open Bible.

first in the Hague, later in London and Paris.

However, after seven years he quit the lucrative art business. In his opinion, these prestigious galleries only catered to the well-to-do and did not serve human needs. This was the last quarter of the 19th century, the darkest period of the Industrial Revolution.

The overwhelming human misery in the slums of London and Paris moved Vincent with compassion. Why peddle art when there was so much to do for the

I could draw them so that those unknown types would be brought before the eyes of the people."

From the beginning it was not "l'art pour l'art" that drove him. He wanted his work to speak for those who could not speak for themselves, show those forgotten toilers to the world as a cry for compassion and help. "Theo — I want to paint men and women with that something of the eternal which the halo used to symbolize, and which I seek to confer by the actual radiance and vibration of colourings."

Vincent saw something of that eternal, of a halo, everywhere. In the lives of Sien the prostitute, the potato-eaters, the miners and the Madame Roulin rocking the cradle of little Marceline. Isn't this how Jesus looked at people?

Close to the Eternal home

The moving picture of the old man at the fireplace is another example. Lonely, broken by grief, his fists clenched in helplessness, he nears the end of life's journey. But Vincent called it *At Eternity's Gate*. "I have tried to express the existence of God and eternity

I experienced connections between Vincent's struggle and my own, and realized more and more that Vincent was becoming my wounded healer.

Henry Nouwen.

in the infinitely touching expression of such a little old man which he himself is perhaps unconscious of, when he is sitting quietly in his corner by the fire. At the same time there is something noble, something great, which cannot be destined for the worms. This is far from theology, simply the fact that the poorest little woodcutter or peasant on the heath or miner can have moments of emotion and inspiration which give him a feeling of an eternal home, and of being close to it."

And what did Jesus mean to Vincent after the church had closed the door on him "in the name of Jesus Christ"? "Dear Theo! Oh, I am not a friend of the present Christianity, though its founder was sublime."

In June 1888 Vincent received a letter from a younger painter-friend, Emile Bernard, who had begun to read the Bible. "Aries, End June 1888. My dear

Bernard: It is a very good thing that you read the Bible. I start with this because I have refrained from recommending it to you. The Bible is Christ. Christ alone has affirmed, as a principal certainty, eternal life, the infinity of time, the nothingness of death, the necessity and the *raison d'être* of serenity and devotion. He lived serenely, as a greater artist than all other artists, despising marble and clay, as well as colour, working in living flesh. That is to say, this matchless artist made neither statues nor pictures nor books; he loudly proclaimed that he made living men immortals."

a model, he reached for the great biblical symbol — the sun, Christ the Light, conquering the darkness of death.

Critics miss biblical symbols

Now let us return to that first painting — the snuffed out candle, the old family Bible, and the yellow, tattered copy of Emile Zola's *La Joie de Vivre*. Should we believe the commentator that this provides proof that Vincent had turned his back on religion and embraced the light-hearted, naturalistic lifestyle of *La Belle France*?



Searching for comfort

Years of hunger, work, loneliness and rejection had ravaged Vincent's health, physically and mentally. Afraid that new attacks would strike him down he surrendered May 1889 to an institution for the insane, an asylum near the town of St. Remy-de-Provence.

Forced to stay inside, he "copied" some prints his brother sent him.

For Vincent, it was no mere copying; he used those prints as starting points for his own work. He called it "translation" or "interpretation" — "comparable to the activity of a musician reinterpreting a composition, e.g., Beethoven." It was his way of searching for comfort in his suffering.

He reinterpreted *Pieta* by Delacroix showing Jesus after his crucifixion in the arms of Mary. Do we recognize, in the anguish and tender care of Mary, Vincent's own love of Jesus?

Another print he worked on, also by Delacroix, was *The Good Samaritan*. "I want to be a friend of the poor, like Jesus was," he once said in the Borinage. Whether preaching or painting, the message remained the same. And had he not seen the priest, the church, passing by on the other side of the road?

Most astonishing, however, is his "translation" of Rembrandt's *The Raising of Lazarus*. Instead of Rembrandt's majestic figure of Jesus, Vincent painted the sun — one blazing furnace of light. Had the sun taken the place of Christ? Had Vincent, as many art critics claim, embraced naturalism, in vogue in the late 19th century?

Previously, Vincent had painted Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. "But," he said, "I have scraped off that study because I tell myself I must not do figures of that importance without models." Lacking such

The candle is burnt out. His father had just died. Even though they had clashed vehemently, Vincent loved him dearly. He looked upon his father as a real pastor, never sparing himself if he could make the light shine in the lives of the sick and the dying. Now the little candle had been put out.

The old family Bible lies open to Isaiah, chapter 53. This includes the Suffering Servant passage — the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, wounded for our transgressions, with whose stripes we are healed, despised and rejected.

But what about that copy of Zola's *La Joie de Vivre*? In spite of the title, it tells a sad story. It reflects the pessimism, boredom and emptiness of a sick society. Against that sombre background, Zola portrays Pauline, a young woman. Despite much suffering she finds the joy of life in service. "She would have liked to be able to love more, to sacrifice herself, to bear injustice and insult, if thereby she could better relieve the suffering of others Gradually she recognized her own voice, arguing with herself, what did her suffering matter, provided those she loved were happy."

No wonder Vincent recognized in Pauline the image of the Suffering Servant and placed *La Joie de Vivre* beside the old Bible opened at Isaiah 53. That does not mean that Zola's novel took the place of the Gospel. On the contrary, it showed how the Man of Sorrows could speak to modern humanity. That is what Vincent also tried to do through his paintings. "Painting to us is a comforting art for sore souls!"

Vincent Van Gogh remained an evangelist until the day he broke down under that burden.

Gabe Rienks is a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada living in Brantford, Ont. He is willing to present a program on Van Gogh, with his wife Afina reading from the Letters. Rev. Gabe Rienks, 32 Tatela Heights Rd., Brantford, ON N9T 1A1.

This article first appeared in *The Presbyterian Record*, January 1992.

Not all eastern Germans face a gleaming future

Wallace Bratt

Things clearly are starting to look better east of the Elbe. The grim drabness, dullness and decay which characterized most East German cities during 40 years of communist rule are slowly giving way to bright colours, renovation and new buildings. The picture is the same everywhere, from Rostock and Stralsund in the north to Dresden and Eisenbach in the south.

Yet the urban landscape is mixed. For each renovated building with its newly sandblasted brick or shiny paint one finds four buildings in need of extensive repair. It will take a good deal of time before entire cities in Germany's East gleam as brightly as they do in the West.

One could say something similar about the people inhabiting these cities and villages. Most North Americans assume that East Germans formerly trapped behind the Wall must now be reveling in their shining new freedoms. It's not that simple. The lives of many eastern Germans, like the faces of their cities, tend to be a compound of relief and depression, of promise and pain.

But not in all strata of society.

For students, young people and many young families the new economic and political order is full of promise and possibilities. The choking strictures of Germany behind the Wall have fallen away and interesting new educational and occupational opportunities are theirs. Many of them have learned quickly that success will come only with persistent hard work, but they have both the physical and emotional energy to get on with the task.

Things tend to be a good deal tougher for their parents, however. Large numbers of them have become unemployed and the job market is grim. Retraining is difficult for them both because of the commitment of time and energy involved and because of their age. Many of them seem emotionally fatigued. And even if they do successfully retrain, they find themselves facing a very uncertain job market.

A serious cut-back

Early in June my wife and I, together with long-time friends from the former East Germany, visited with the chief of the extensive hospital laboratories which are a part of the medical



Many East Germans can only window shop in their new world.

Photo: CHENOT/SIPA

complex of the University of Rostock on the Baltic coast. A quiet, gentle man with a PhD in chemistry; he is a sensitive, committed Christian. The day we visited in his home he also was deeply troubled.

Not that his family's life is without bright spots. He and his wife have two sons and both of them now are doing graduate work in chemistry — one of them in Canada, the other in the U.S. His eyes glowed when he spoke of them. He clearly rejoiced in the new possibilities which are theirs.

However, when he explained the situation in his laboratory complex, his face clouded. The word had come from the responsible federal government agencies that his budget was to be reduced by 50 per cent. On the very day we visited him he was working with a committee which had to decide which laboratory colleagues had to be released. His own job, despite his seniority, was also threatened. Given his age — he is 56 — and the job market, release would mean permanent unemployment. He had hoped for better things when the Wall finally fell.

A troubled retirement

A second of many visits was with a Christian physician who had recently retired after decades of work as chief surgeon in a Lutheran hospital in Thuringia. Two of his children had moved to what was West Germany. One is a surgical resident who was given a stipend for advanced training in a hospital in St. Louis. The second is a fashion designer whose profession would have been virtually useless in communist days. Now the world is open to her, her parents told us. Shortly

after Christmas her firm even sent her to Miami! A mere three years ago neither of them could even have dreamed of such opportunities.

Two older siblings, both married and with children, had stayed in the East. Their prospects were anything but glowing. Both of them faced the likelihood of permanent layoff.

Our surgeon friend was, by his own admission, depressed. Not only was he trying to cope with adjustment to retirement; but after decades of conscientious service he and his wife had been forced to leave the rented home in which they had raised their children through the toughest of times. West German owners had decided to sell it and had asked a price which, though consistent with market value, was infinitely beyond their ability to pay.

Despite the acute housing shortage in the East, they had found an apartment. It is, by Eastern standards, bright and spacious. However, his government pension is such that he and his wife will ultimately be forced to sell some of their personal belongings to meet routine expenses. They had anticipated a less troubled retirement.

Need for understanding

Though outspoken and courageous in his protest against the communist regime during the last five years of its existence, our surgeon friend now is resentful of what he terms West German superciliousness. Even close relatives living in the West, he laments, are only and always critical of everything that happened in the East, be it in the realm of medicine,

the church, industry or sports.

The West always knows better and is either unable or unwilling to understand why East Germans are struggling so badly. Some good things did happen before the revolution of 1989, he reminded us. Back then people at least had time for one another. The new free-market world, in contrast, is hard, cold and uncaring.

His wife, though sharing his disappointment and hurt, was more even-handed in parcelling out blame. Instead of simply indicting the West, she quietly suggested that both East and West are at fault. Admirable and generous as her attitude might be, it could not significantly relieve the frustration she shared with her husband. In fact, the realization that both sides are both right and wrong only increased it.

The typical response of North Americans, Christians among them, is that "it's just a matter of time," thereby implying that East Germans should be both more thankful and more patient. Before we become too glib in our judgments, however, we might do well to put political prejudice aside and place ourselves in their shoes. Some of them have walked long miles over difficult terrain in the past 40 years and they're tired. And the new world into which they have stumbled has some very rough patches which they never expected.

Wallace Bratt teaches German at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich. He has had extensive contact with people in the former East Germany.

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'Kingdom vision' is transforming churches in Nigeria

John H. Boer

Nigeria has been blessed with a myriad of foreign missionaries, beginning about the middle of the 19th century. But it has been a mixed blessing. With few exceptions, these missions have brought a pietistic spirit to the Nigerian Christian church. From its inception this spirit led the church to frown on members who are active in "worldly" endeavors, such as business, civil service and especially politics.

Evangelicals of all stripes came with their traditional dualism of grace and nature, telling the people that God is much more interested in spiritual things than he is in the world. And unfortunately, most of the earlier Christian Reformed missionaries were of a similar pietistic nature that has been absorbed into the food streams of our Nigerian sister denominations, the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN) and the Church of Christ in the Sudan Among the Tiv (NKST).

The result has been almost fatal, especially in politics. As churches grew in membership and political clout, they kept looking askance at their members who went into politics. These members enjoyed neither blessing nor guidance from the Christian community. That they became secular in their approach and vulnerable to the rules of the political game is not surprising. For example, when the various state governments, under Muslim pressure, took over many Christian schools and hospitals in the 1970s, the Christian churches complained without lifting a finger. They simply were not equipped to oppose such open confrontation. Their "theology" left them with an empty arsenal.

'Politics a dirty game'

The taking over of those institutions is one of the factors that has set in motion a change in the churches toward a Reformed world and life view. Christians throughout Nigeria are now realizing that when you leave politics to non-Christians, the country will be steered into the Muslim camp.

The Christian Association of Nigeria, the widest ecumenical body in the country that includes the CRCN and NKST, addressed this issue in a booklet that has been banned by some Nigerian state governments.

"The missionaries did not impart to us the technique of governance," the booklet states. "A Christian should not be interested in politics, we were told. Truly politics is a dirty game, but who will make it clean? The righteous can not

rule if he is taught not to be interested in government."

Christians have seen the light in this respect. They are doing what they can to overcome the spiritual vacuum created by pietism. Bitter recent experiences have forced upon them the imperative of political action at every front. When confronted by a religion like Islam that rejects any notion of separation of church and state and that cannot cope with pluralism, pietism becomes a fatal stance that condemns Christians to the sidelines.

The new Christian insistence on a strong political presence is the main cause behind the frequent uprisings and burnings of churches in recent years in Nigeria. Nigerian Muslims are nervous about the growing political muscle of Christians. They do not know how to cope with it so they erupt in irrational uprisings.

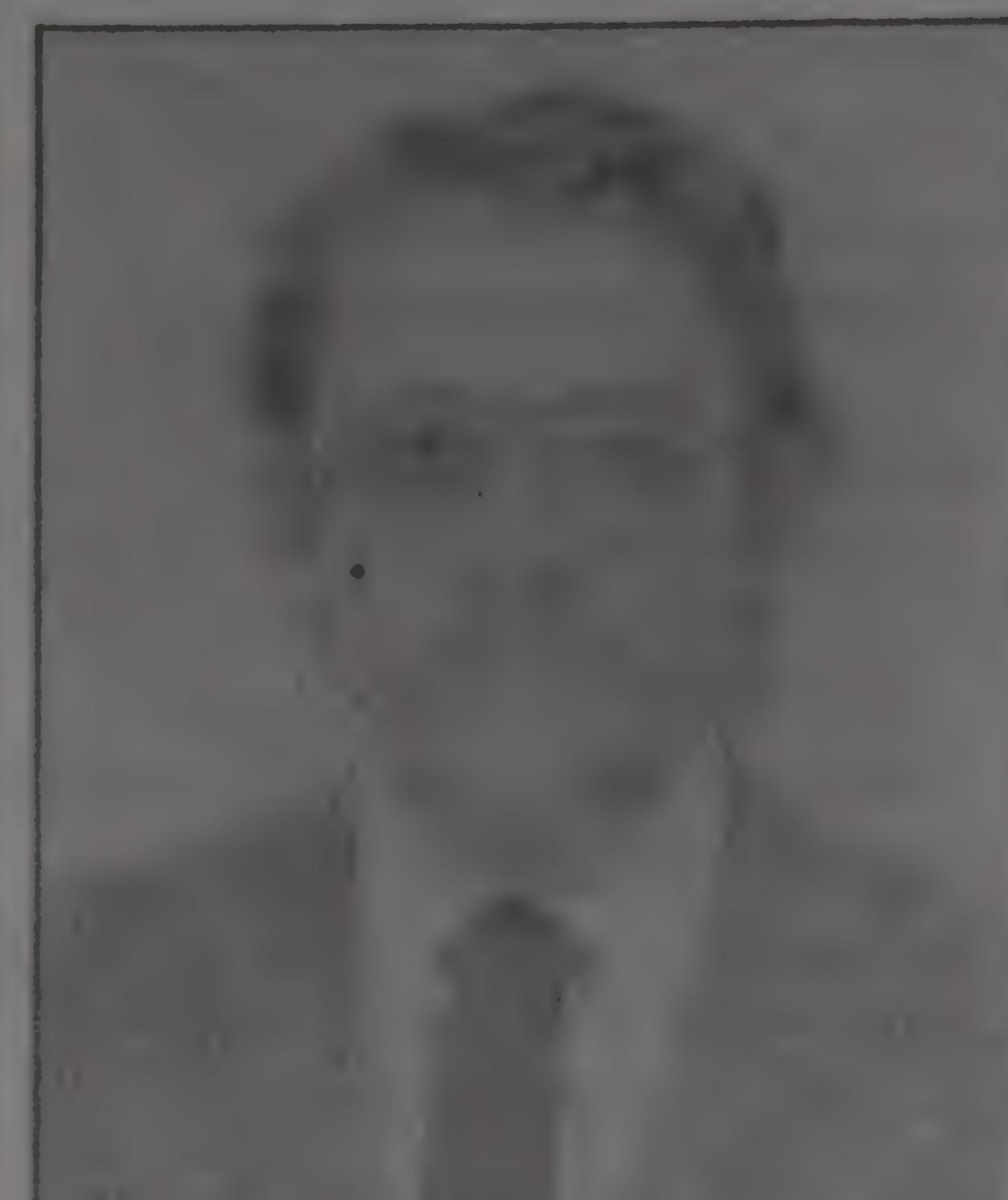
Pietism leads to powerlessness

This developing realization that the Word of God must be a governing influence on all of life is also leading to new developments in other areas of the church. A friend of mine with a doctorate from an American university holds a very high administrative post in a major Nigerian church with a fundamentalist background. He has opted for the Reformed world and life view because he has seen that the view of his own church leads to powerlessness in both social and spiritual matters. One denomination with a Baptist background has recently changed its name to "Evangelical Reformed." Only recently a Pentecostal friend advised me that Nigeria needs more Reformed literature, precisely because it needs guidance in applying the Word of God to life.

It is particularly gratifying to me that some people who have recently been elected to political offices have done so in direct response to my interaction with them in the context of my work with the Institute of Church and Society.

One, Matthew Adams, has become our local mayor. Another person, who became the deputy governor of a state, confided in me that he ran for this office as a result of my writings. A great number of Christians have followed in their footsteps. The two states in which the CRCN and NKST are located, Taraba and Benue, both have Christian clergy for their governors. The point is that all of these people are politically active Christians.

It is no accident that the NKST has decided to establish its own "Institute for



John H. Boer

Christian Studies." Only a few years ago, the NKST synod declared that Christians are not members of any party except that of Jesus. They have come a long way since then. They now seek ways to subdue all of life to the Kingdom of God.

'Kingdom vision' not just talk

Members of the CRC in North America who do not

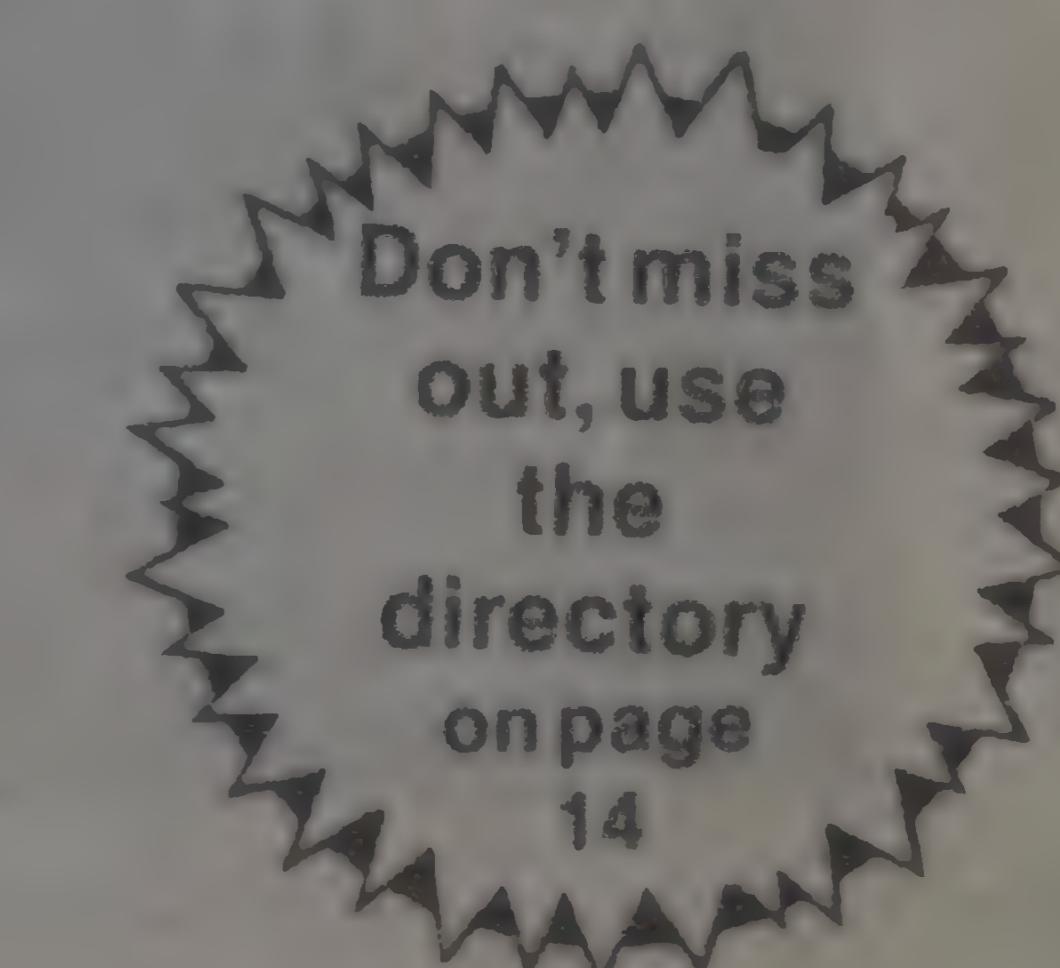
recognize the power inherent in their tradition's Kingdom emphasis could learn from their Nigerian counterparts. These Nigerians have experienced almost two decades of crises that are largely the result of powerlessness inherited from pietism. They have come to recognize the difference a Reformed world and life view, with its comprehensive Kingdom vision, can make in such a struggle. Instead of running away from political issues, the Reformed perspective encourages tackling them in the name of Christ.

Under a military regime for many years, Nigeria is now preparing for a return to civilian politics. In the past, largely because of their dualistic heritage, the role of Christians in politics was discouraging.

Let us pray that this time around, with a new appreciation of a Reformed perspective, Christians will

make a positive contribution to the emerging political scene. This is no time for Christian Reformed World Missions to retreat into a narrow church-growth philosophy. Our challenge today is to stand at the side of Nigerian Christians to encourage such positive developments in every way we can.

Dr. John Boer is a missionary with Christian Reformed World Missions and serves as a consultant with the Institute of Church and Society in Jos, Nigeria. He is a member of and holds ministerial credentials in Second CRC, Highland, Indiana. John Boer grew up in Port Alberni, B.C., and the Boers' mission work is supported largely by churches in Alberta and B.C.



Malaysian prince surfaces with abducted children

Melinda Jordan

MELBOURNE, Australia (NNI) — A Malaysian prince who abducted his two children because they were baptized as Christians said it was the will of Allah that he remove them from their mother's home and thanked Allah for his success in smuggling them to Malaysia.

Raja Bahrin Shah, prince of the Malaysian state of Trengganu, emerged from hiding in Kuala Lumpur, July 26, three weeks after Iddin Gillespie, 9, and his sister Shah, 7, disappeared during an access visit by their natural father.

Speaking at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur, the prince said he had taken the children to ensure an Islamic upbringing. He said it was Allah who made his secret mission possible. "It was not my decision but almighty Allah's. When Allah wants something to happen, it happens. Allah in this case wants my children to grow up as Muslims," he said.

The children's mother, Jacqueline Gillespie, and her second husband, Ian, a Melbourne journalist, were granted sole custody of the children by the Australian Family Court in 1985 after she divorced Shah. An Australian citizen, she was 17 and a ballet dancer when she met the prince, then an architecture student in Melbourne. They were married in 1981 and she subsequently lived with him in Malaysia for four years.

She left Shah in 1985 after he took a second wife and ordered that his daughter undergo female circumcision.

Following the divorce, Gillespie returned to the Anglican Church, where the children were christened. The father was officially notified of the ceremony last year by the Family Court.

The prince and the children were the subject of an intense search by the Australian Federal Police. It is believed the trio escaped via northern Australia to Irian Jaya aboard the Indonesian fishing boat Pencheroboh.

Shah said it was his "duty as a father to restore [the children] to their original faith." He said he had been prepared to let the children stay in Australia provided they were given an Islamic upbringing. Shah claimed the children were "happy and in high spirits." Photographs of the children

smiling and playing with their cousins were carried in local newspapers and shown on Malaysian television. The Gillespies, however, described the footage as a farce.

Under Islamic law, custody is awarded to the mother for children under 10. However, a mother can lose custody if she abandons Islam, is of unsound mind or remarries. Although Gillespie remarried, Shah had signed a consent order in November 1991 allowing the children to remain with their mother.

Malaysian authorities do not recognize the children's Australian citizenship, claiming they were born in Malaysia and are therefore Muslims. The Gillespies said they will attempt to legally regain custody of the children. However, 15 Malaysian lawyers contacted to represent them have refused to accept the case.

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Feature

The Brigadier was a lady

August 19 marked the 50th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid, one of the most tragic battles of the Second World War. In this article, Canadian Scene's Ottawa correspondent Larry MacDonald recalls an assignment to Dieppe. As a CBC television reporter he travelled to France in 1977 for the commemorative service marking the 35th anniversary of the raid.

In the early morning hours of Aug. 19, 1942, British and Allied Armed Forces hit the beaches of Dieppe. The majority of the attacking force,

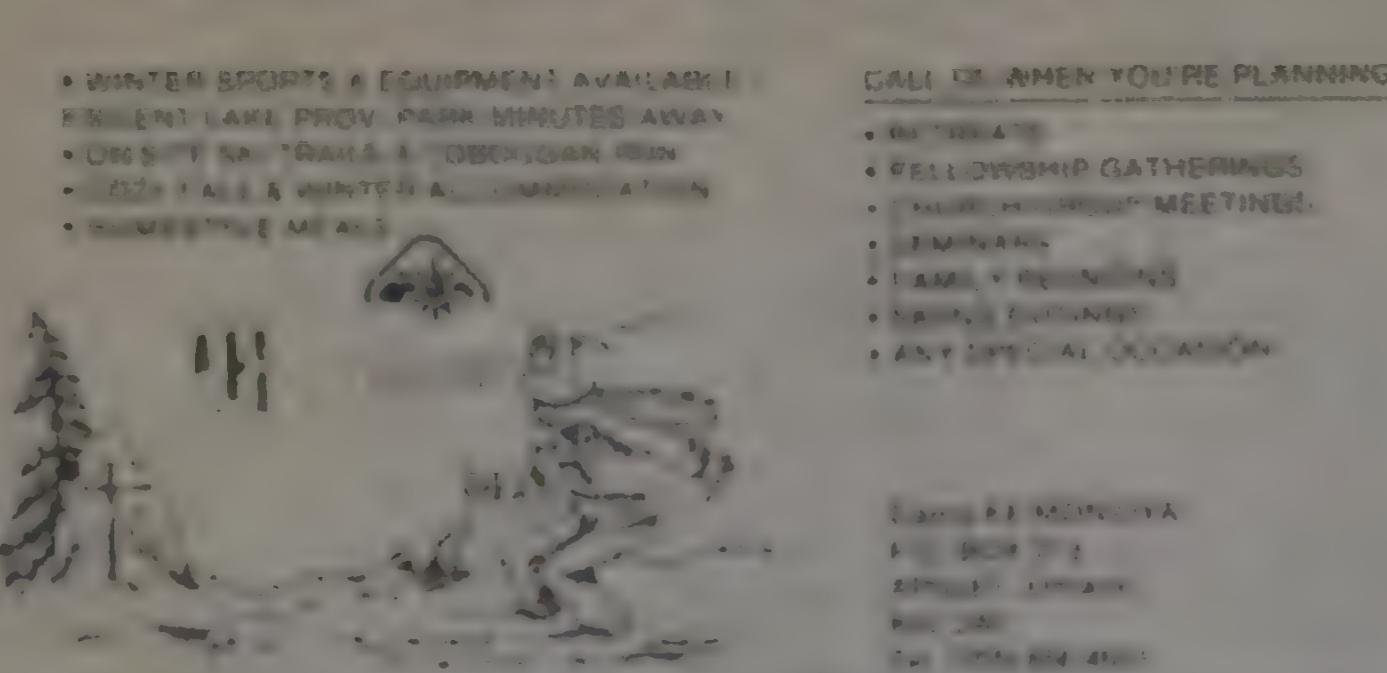
5,000 out of 6,000, were Canadians. There were 50 American Rangers and the remainder were British Commandos.

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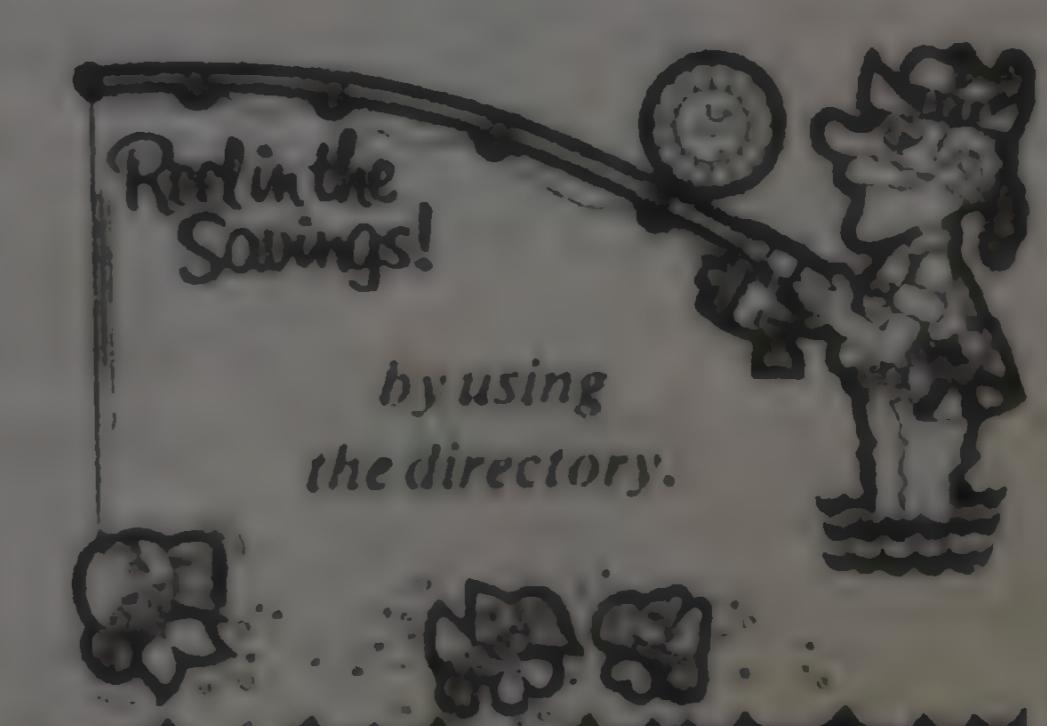
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The Germans were waiting.

Famous Canadian army units were all but wiped out on the beach from the withering cliff-top German fire. Ancillary air force and navy personnel also suffered, but not to the extent of the infantry.

No other action during the Second World War in which Canadians took part has been so thoroughly analyzed, criticized or supported. The debate goes on. For the survivors, now in their 70s, bitter memories remain.

At Dieppe on Aug. 19, 1977, the religious service over, I slowly walked through the Canadian cemetery. There are 944 names chiselled into the

headstones, 707 of them Canadian. I looked at what was common to all: name, rank, number, unit and date of death. Senior officers lie next to privates. All are equal in death.

Unusual company

As I walked, I came to an abrupt halt. There on one headstone was the name of a woman. A woman buried among these nearly 1,000 Allied servicemen? I looked at the headstone more closely. At the top, the badge of the Salvation Army. And below: Mrs. Brigadier Mary Janet Climpson, Salvation Army, 20th May 1940, Age 56.

I learned later that Salvation Army wives take the same rank as their husbands. Then it was brigadier. A few years ago the rank was abolished and replaced with that of major.

But how did Mary Climpson die and why was she, a civilian, buried in a cemetery reserved for servicemen and women?

Checking, I found that Brigadier Climpson met her death when her mobile Salvation Army van was machine gunned by German aircraft on the Arras Road. Other Salvationists in the vehicle, including her husband, wrapped the brigadier in a blanket, placed her on the car

seat and continued on to Dieppe. They thought they would be safe from further attacks since it was their understanding that the town had been "covenanted," that is to say, protected by an agreement from both sides that neither would attack.

Such was not the case.

Dieppe was under heavy air attack. Burial of Brigadier Climpson was out of the question until the next day when some British soldiers dug a grave and set up a marker. Later, when the Dieppe Canadian War Cemetery, Hautot-Sur-Mer, was ready, Brigadier Climpson's body was disinterred and reburied under a little known provision of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. That section makes allowances for members of civilian service organizations such as the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, which worked with the armed forces and whose people were accepted as members of the forces, to be buried in war cemeteries. Commission officials deemed Brigadier Climpson in that category.

It is interesting to note that the commission lists the dead as "944 men" of the British and Allied Forces.

That really should read, "943 men ... and one woman."

When medical treatment for a child becomes futile

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — A 16-year-old girl lies in the hospital dying of cancer. Her mother repeatedly asks the doctor, "Have you tried everything? Isn't any treatment better than none?"

This painful question is discussed by Sister Nuala Kenny, M.D., in the Summer 1992 issue of *calyx*, the quarterly periodical of the department of bioethics of The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

Parents often have a powerful belief in the ability of modern medical science to cure, says Dr. Kenny. This is coupled by medicine's overriding desire to cure. Not to do "everything possible" seems to give up control, something that doctors and parents of child patients find very hard to do.

But for medical treatment to be offered there must be a reasonable expectation of benefit to the child, given that with all medical treatment there is risk of harm, she says.

Protection from futile treatment

Kenny says there is a difference between appropriately aggressive medical treatment, inappropriately aggressive treatment and futile treatment. With futile treatment there is no reasonable hope for medical benefit and significant risk of serious harm.

A six-year-old boy had widely spread cancer, but was aggressively treated with chemotherapy, reports Dr. Mark L. Greenberg in the same issue of *calyx*. There were major side effects but he lived almost a year before the cancer

came back. His parents were then told that further chemotherapy would be useless.

The parents demanded to know whether there were any drugs that had not yet been used. The doctor told them that there were but that they would be useless. The parents insisted that they be tried anyway.

What is a doctor to do? Greenberg says that the issue is what is in the best interest of the child. Does a parent have the right to insist on treatment which would harm a child and not help him or her? Is the child not in need of protection from this? asks Greenberg.

Doctors serve patients, not clients

At the core of medicine, says Greenberg, is the doctrine that the doctor must first do no harm to the patient. But he says that there is an increase in parental demanding that treatment be given to a child that the doctor considers futile.

Greenberg says that this attitude arises with a growing belief that obtaining medical services is an act of consumerism rather than entering a professional relationship. But obtaining professional expertise, he says, obliges a person to certain commitments and responsibilities. A person becomes a patient, not a client.

A client, however, purchases certain services, and if not happy with the services, shops around for a better deal. A

client believes that by reading, listening and watching, he or she is equipped to make difficult decisions at the expert level. "Let the buyer beware" is the watchword of the client.

The obligation of a doctor is to start aggressive medical treatment only when

appropriate, and otherwise to provide compassionate palliative care, says Nuala Kenny. This frees parents to accept the task of assisting their child with the best possible death, as difficult as that may be.



It's difficult to give up on a child.

Photo: Call Them Canadians



small talk

Alice Los

To beep or not to beep

I have a tea kettle, and even though it serves me well it has one annoying feature. Once the water boils and before it shuts itself off it lets go with a series of loud, offensive beeps.

But I'm stuck with the thing. When I brought it home the beeper was news to me but circumstances (such as a house full of visitors that very evening and many miles between our house and the store) prevented me from exchanging it for a less agitated model.

And so I cringe, I object, I try to endure several times each day when the quiet of my kitchen is rent asunder by that rude beeper. I try not to take it out on that hapless kettle. But I would like to have a word with its manufacturer. What makes them think I can't see for myself that the water has reached 100°C?

I find it an arrogant assumption that I and others would need or even want a shrill reminder that the water is boiling. That manufacturer is, of course, not the only one who takes me for a helpless fool. All microwave ovens pierce the air with their version of, "I'm done!" And when I step into my car and turn the key I'm yelled at by yet another device reminding me to fasten my seatbelt.

I know that I must buckle up and I know when the three minutes for the microwave oven are up. I can tell time, can't I? Meanwhile I find myself talking back to many an inane and inert object. I tell each of them to be quiet and to mind their own business.

Reminders of being too busy

True, it could be argued that I might have

opted for a beeper-less kettle had I had my wits about me when I picked one from the shelf in the store. There's even something to be said for a jingle on a microwave oven or in favour of an encouraging nudge toward using the seatbelts in my car, pesky as they are.

Yet all these things seem to be part of an evolution which disclaims self-sufficiency or supposes lack of attention for the task at hand. It confirms that life has become too busy.

As a mother of six I have often tried to do more than a few things at once and I even enjoyed the challenge. But a series of bells and whistles would not have helped me in any way. So why should I put up with them now? Life has become too noisy as it is.

I know I cannot turn back time, but I wonder what memories will be made of in the future when people think back on an evening with their folks at home? Somehow I think the clicks of a remote TV controller, the beeps and buzzes of a computer game and the beat of rock music in a room upstairs cannot ever be compared to the sound of knitting needles, water softly murmuring on the stove and the rustling of a newspaper across the table. Even so, if the beeps and clicks of today will be fondly remembered by the seniors of tomorrow, why would I quarrel with that? Time to put the kettle on!

Alice Los lives in Inkerman, Ont., where she often savours the silence of the countryside.

Because of temporary drought
in the flow of letters
Peter and Marja
do not appear in this issue.

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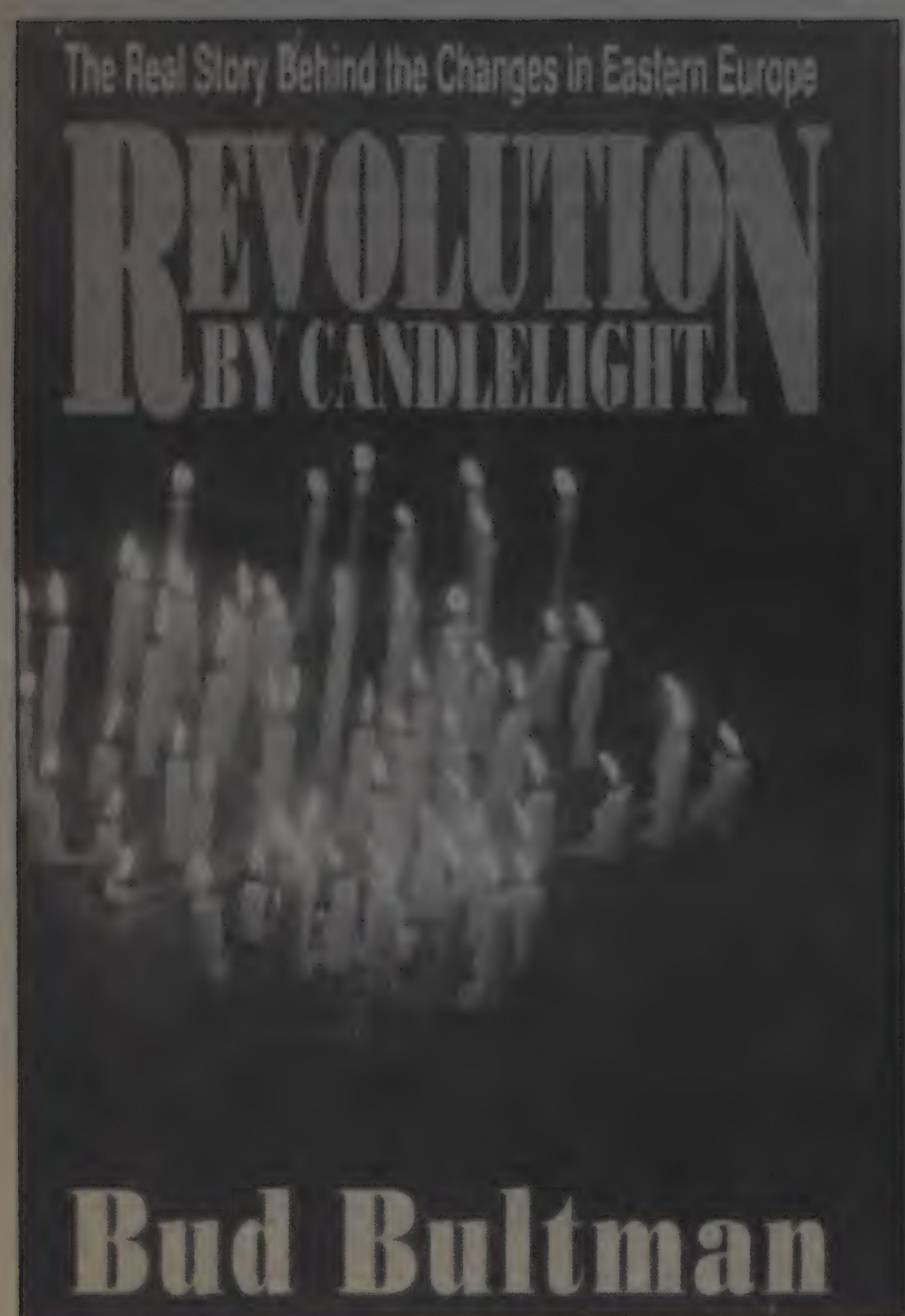
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Book

Robert VanderVennen, page editor

Stories of Christian faith behind the communist collapse



Bud Bultman

Revolution by Candlelight: The Real Story Behind the Changes in Eastern Europe, by Bud Bultman. Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1991. ISBN 0-88070-434-9. Hardcover, 305 pp., \$17.99. Reviewed by David T. Koyzis, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

It has now been nearly three years since the dramatic events of 1989 brought down the communist governments which had ruled the countries of Eastern and Central Europe for some 40 years. A once feared ideology proved in the end to be little more than a

paper kite which was easily blown away after Moscow withdrew support for regimes it had once spawned. Only now are we beginning to come to grips with the developments that in a matter of weeks swept away the old Soviet bloc during the fall of that year.

Revolution by Candlelight will be welcomed by readers wishing to know something of the human side of these events. Bud Bultman, a writer and producer for the Cable News Network (CNN), has woven together a series of vignettes telling the stories of individual persons — some well-known, some not — who either contributed to the unfolding dramas or were affected by them in some way. The common element in the lives of these people is the role of their Christian faith. The earliest story begins in Budapest, Hungary, in 1977 and concerns the

government's attempt to shut down a Methodist church. The latest stories occur practically simultaneously in East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania at the end of 1989.

Reporting or story-telling? Not surprisingly, perhaps, the book's style is novelistic, the pace is fast-moving and the narrative jumps rather too suddenly from one episode to the next. Although Bultman's information is based on interviews, first person accounts and other sources (which he lists in the back), his recounting of these stories often reads like fiction. For example, "They were so overwhelmed by the tension of the moment they barely noticed the elegant furnishings of the famed conductor's home." This sort of thing may be intended to appeal to a popular audience, but some readers are likely to find it distracting and artificial.

Moreover, in the epilogue the author at one point switches rather jarringly from a general discussion of the plight of these countries after communism's collapse back into story-telling mode.

Revolution by Candlelight is worthwhile as light reading for anyone with an interest in the revolutionary events of 1989. It supplements what we read in the newspapers at the time with an account of the role Christianity played — something which the secular media were likely to have missed. Nevertheless, the "real story behind the changes in Eastern Europe" remains to be told.



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Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Unity

"How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!" (Psalm 133: 1).

This is a true story and there are many others like it. A family had not been attending worship services at a particular church for a number of years. Elders of the church had tried, with varying degrees of success, to provide pastoral encouragement.

Finally a new elder, younger and more forthright, said to the couple, "Look, it doesn't sound to me like you really want any contact with us! Are we just kidding ourselves?"

Then they admitted it. No, they hadn't given up their faith. But it was true that they didn't want contact from this church again.

Root cause

Why? The elder probed a little deeper.

Every Sunday after we got married, the couple said, we'd go to one parental home and then the other for coffee or a meal. We'd sit around the coffee table in one home and we'd hear all the criticisms of the church: the sermon was no good; the minister wasn't doing his job; the theological controversies were dividing the church. Then we'd go to the other parental home and the conversation around the meal table would be the same: who was doing what to whom, how the church was no good, how the consistories and classes and synods were making all wrong decisions.

We finally got sick of it. We haven't left God; he hasn't left us. But we really don't want to ruin our spirituality anymore by going to that church!

Heresy versus hypocrisy

Sound familiar? Sometimes, perhaps even many times, to be sure, people are looking for excuses, and comments like these come off as rather hypocritical. But not always! In fact, a recent speaker at a church development workshop said that there is a significant dividing line running through our North American society: those who were born in the 1940s and earlier tend to be more concerned about *heresy* than they are about *hypocrisy*, while those born after 1950 tend to sit easily with persons whose theological stripe is slightly different, but they can't stomach hypocritical double-talk or two-faced living.

It has to do, he said, with the intermingling of cultures and societies, and the exploding population of our post-World War II era. In any case, if he's right, there may be a reason for the lack of denominational loyalty that seems to mushroom every year. People won't stick with something that talks theology but lives criticism and controversy.

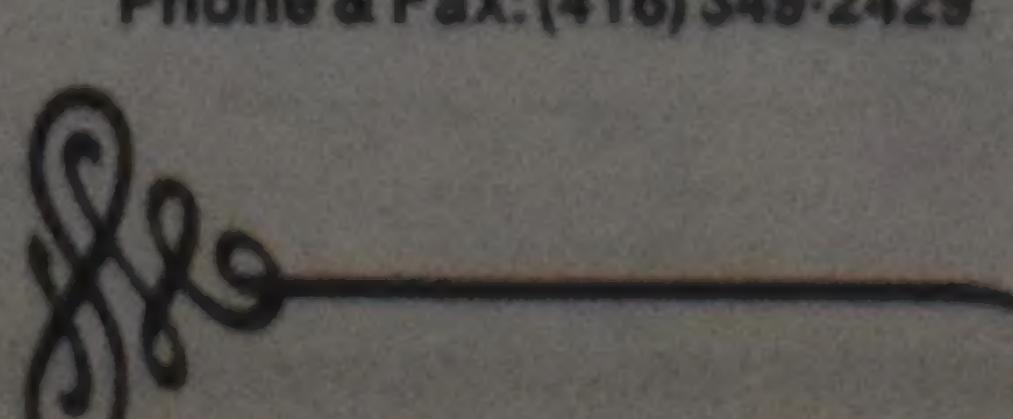
Getting back to basics

Is the new trend a lower form of spirituality than the staunch devotion to church structures in past eras? Some might think so. But when one looks at the Bible, it's time to square critical and divisive spirits with true godliness. In Psalm 133 David pictures unity as the prime quality of saintliness. He points to the anointing of the priests as a teaching image: the oil of God symbolizing his Spirit of leadership is poured only on the head. But it then runs down over the entire person, touching every quarter with its same empowering essence. Where there is one Spirit of anointing, there is one unity of identity and purpose.

There's where the blessing of the Lord is, says David. Jesus, of course, says the same thing (John 14:17), and Paul is of like mind (1 Corinthians). Maybe it's time we catch up with some old-fashioned spirituality like that once again. Who knows? The souls we bring back to the church may be those of our own children!

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

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Classified rates	Marriages	Anniversaries	Obituaries	Teachers
GST Inclusive Births.....\$25.00 Marriages & Engagements.....\$40.00 Anniversaries.....\$45.00 2-column anniversaries.....\$90.00 Obituaries.....\$45.00 Notes of thanks.....\$35.00 Birthdays.....\$40.00 All other one-column classified advertisements: \$13.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$25.00. Letter under file number, \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.) Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive. ATTENTION! a) <i>Calvinist Contact</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format, unless you instruct us otherwise. b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion. c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original. d) <i>Calvinist Contact</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements. e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to six column inches. <i>Calvinist Contact</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$13.50 per column inch (GST inclusive).	<p>RUMPH-VELDHOEN: Jake and Teresa Rumph are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter</p> <p>CYNTHIA TERESA JOYCE to JOHN EDWARD</p> <p>son of Mert and Rita Veldhoen. The wedding ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on Saturday, Sept. 19, 1992, at 3 p.m., in the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Woodbridge, Ont., Rev. J. van Stempvoort officiating.</p> <p>Future address: 31 Park Drive, Woodbridge, ON L4H 2H4</p> <p>Anniversaries</p>  <p>Congratulations to Jan Arie and Jacomina Grootenboer on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary!</p>	<p>1967 September 15 1992 "In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths" (Prov. 3:6). Rejoice with us as we celebrate our silver wedding anniversary. We pray that God will continue to bless us and keep us in his care in the years to come.</p> <p>JOHN and LOUISE WIERSMA (nee MUYS)</p> <p>Bradley Paul Amanda Joyce & Martin (fiance) Edward John Robert Peter Home address: 1014 Mountcastle Cr., Pickering, ON L1V 5J2</p>	<p>"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). On Aug. 26, 1992, the Lord called home our dear wife, mother and grandmother after a long struggle with cancer.</p> <p>ALICE SCHIPPER at the age of 66. Beloved wife of Henry Schipper. Beloved mother and grandmother of: Harry & Grace Schipper — Eden, Ont. Erica, Laura, Darryl and Anita James Schipper — London, Ont. Hilda & Bill Vander Klippe — Lucknow, Ont. Nathan, Stephen, Daniel (pre-deceased) and Lisa Rudolf & Sharon Schipper — Aylmer, Ont. Derek, Alicia, Randy and Emilee Gerald & Grace Schipper — Aylmer, Ont. Henri Andy Schipper — Guelph, Ont. Funeral services were held on Aug. 31, 1992, at 2:00 p.m. Correspondence address: 33 Treadwell St., Aylmer, ON N5H 3B6</p> <p>"Now we know that if the earthly tent is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands" (2 Cor. 5:1). On Friday, Aug. 28, 1992, the Lord took home his daughter,</p> <p>CORNELIA VAN TILBURG (nee AARTSEN)</p> <p>beloved wife of the late Leendert van Tilburg (1991) in her 91st year. She was the loving mother, oma and great-oma of: Jans & Alida Barkhuis Corry & Herb Ralph Ruby & David Isaacs Alex & Nellie Lubbers Ralph Tim & Caroline Johnston Leonard & Bonnie Lubbers Nelda & Paul Veronica & Ed Jack & Corrie Pool Mike & Grace Pool Carolyn Carrie Lyn Grace Also survived by one sister Mary Barendregt of the Netherlands. The funeral was held on Aug. 31, 1992. Correspondence address: Jack Pool, R.R. #1, Woodstock, ON N4S 7V6</p>	<p>DUNNVILLE, Ont.: Dunnville Chr. School invites applicants for a temporary full-time position in Grade 1, from January till June 1993. Please send resumes to: Mr. R. VanEgmond, Dunnville Chr. School R.R.#1, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1 Tel.:(416)774-5142</p> <p>JARVIS, Ont.: Jarvis District Chr. School will be in need of two teachers due to maternity reasons, to complete the 1992-93 school year. We will require a Grade 2 teacher effective Jan. 4, 1993, and a Grade 3 teacher effective Feb. 1, 1993. Please send your letter of application, resumes and references prior to Oct. 16, 1992, to: Garry Glasbergen, Principal Jarvis District Chr. School P.O. Box 520 Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0 For further information please call the principal at (519) 587-4444 (school) or (519) 587-5374 (home).</p> <p>VERNON, B.C.: Vernon Chr. School, due to the anticipated increased student enrollment, is seeking applications for an opening in the intermediate grade levels for the 1992-93 school year. Those interested in this teaching position are encouraged to direct inquiries and/or send resumes to: Elco Vandergrift, R.R. #3, Site 19A, Comp. 4, Vernon, BC V1T 6L6 Phone: (604) 545-7345</p>
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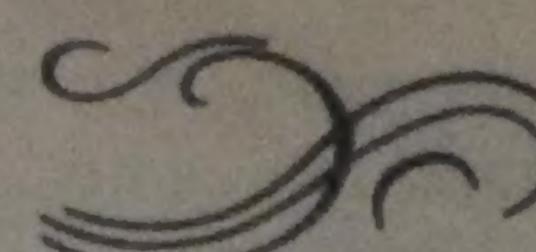
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St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Employment wanted

AVAILABLE FOR CALL

Rev. Jakob H. Kits has served First CRC, Duncan, B.C., for more than seven years as minister of the Word and sacraments. Because his leave of absence will end in November 1992, he will be available for a call to a Christian Reformed congregation. Rev. Kits can be contacted at his current address, 11006-131 St., Edmonton, AB T5M 1B8, by telephoning (403) 454-9334, or by contacting the clerk of First Christian Reformed Church, Duncan, B.C., at (604) 748-7288.

Events



Camp Shalom

15th Annual Fall Fair

Saturday, September 19, 1992

(9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.)

Theme: "Back on the Farm"

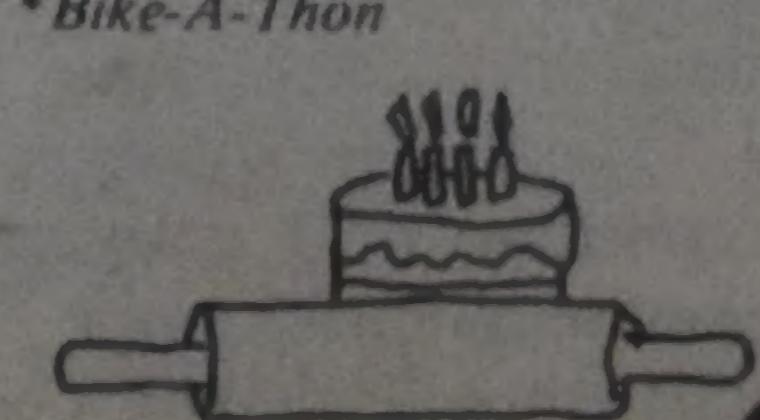
Feature attractions!

- * Reflections music group
- * Mini tractor pull
- * Petting zoo
- * Welcome 20,000th visitor
- * Lots more to see and do.

Annual favourites!

- * Country store
- * Produce and nursery stock
- * Auction sale
- * Tearoom and bake shop
- * Games tent
- * Bike-A-Thon

Camp Shalom
R.R. #4
Cambridge, Ont.
Tel.: (519) 623-4860



"Rooted in Faith... Growing in Service"

Join the Institute for Christian Studies in celebrating "25 Years of Miracles"

You are invited to participate with us in several ways:

Gratitude

With us, thank God

— that graduate-level education from an integral biblical perspective has been available at ICS for the past 25 years.

— that as "the graduate school with a difference" ICS has been able to assist hundreds of men and women from around the world in integrating their faith with their scholarship and their profession.

Participation

Support ICS financially by making a pledge toward its Anniversary Campaign. Help ICS "grow in service" as it responds to the challenges of the next 25 years with its unique research, publication and instructional programs.

Celebration

Plan to join the ICS community in a special Service of Celebration to be held on Sunday, September 20 at 7:00 p.m. in Convocation Hall, University of Toronto.



Institute for Christian Studies
229 College Street
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4
(416) 979-2331

More than deacons come to the All Ontario Diaconal Conference Annual Meeting

You are invited to come too!

Saturday, October 17: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
John Knox Christian School - Brampton



- 15 workshops
- 16 seminars
- information on ministry opportunities

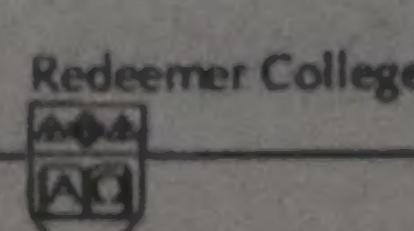
Cost: \$30
(for pre-registration)

For information call: AODC 1-416-646-4511 or contact your local deacons.

The 12th Annual Membership meeting of Redeemer College

will be held on
Saturday, September 26, 1992
at 2:30 p.m. in the
Redeemer College
Auditorium.

Registration at 2:00 p.m.



A Christian University College
Ancaster, Ontario L9G 3N6 (416) 648-2131

Events

TEAKE VAN DER MEER

(a well-known Frisian comedian)

will come to Ontario for a one-week tour. All events start at 8 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 29 - BOWMANVILLE
(Rehoboth CRC, 130 Scugog St.)

Tickets: John Oegema 1-416-623-2318 (and at the door)

Wednesday, Sept. 30 - STRATHROY

(Adelaide McDonald School on Hwy. #22)

Tickets: Dirk DeBoer 1-519-245-2319

Friday, Oct. 2 - VINELAND

(Vineland Public School)

Tickets: Bev. Slopstra 1-519-587-2162

Saturday, Oct. 3 - JARVIS

(Jarvis District Chr. School)

Tickets: Bev. Slopstra 1-519-587-2162

Tickets are \$10 per person. Limited seating.

ANDIJK (NH) - THE NETHERLANDS

Op 31 oktober, 1992, is er in het dorps huis te Andijk een reunie van 125 jaar Prot. Chr. Onderwijs van de Kuijperschool, Idenburgschool en Prinses Marijke school. Er wordt een boek uitgegeven met veel klasfoto's en informatie over deze 125 jaar (kosten van het boek fl. 29.). Voor verdere inlichtingen bel Joe Doef, R.R. #3, Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0. Phone: (403) 782-2704. Fax: (403) 782-3085.

FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF NEW WESTMINSTER

celebrating 40 years in His service.

Friday, October 9, 1992
8:00 p.m.: 'Looking Back'

Sunday, October 11, 1992
9:30 & 11:00 a.m.: 'Looking Forward'

All members — past and present — and their friends are invited.

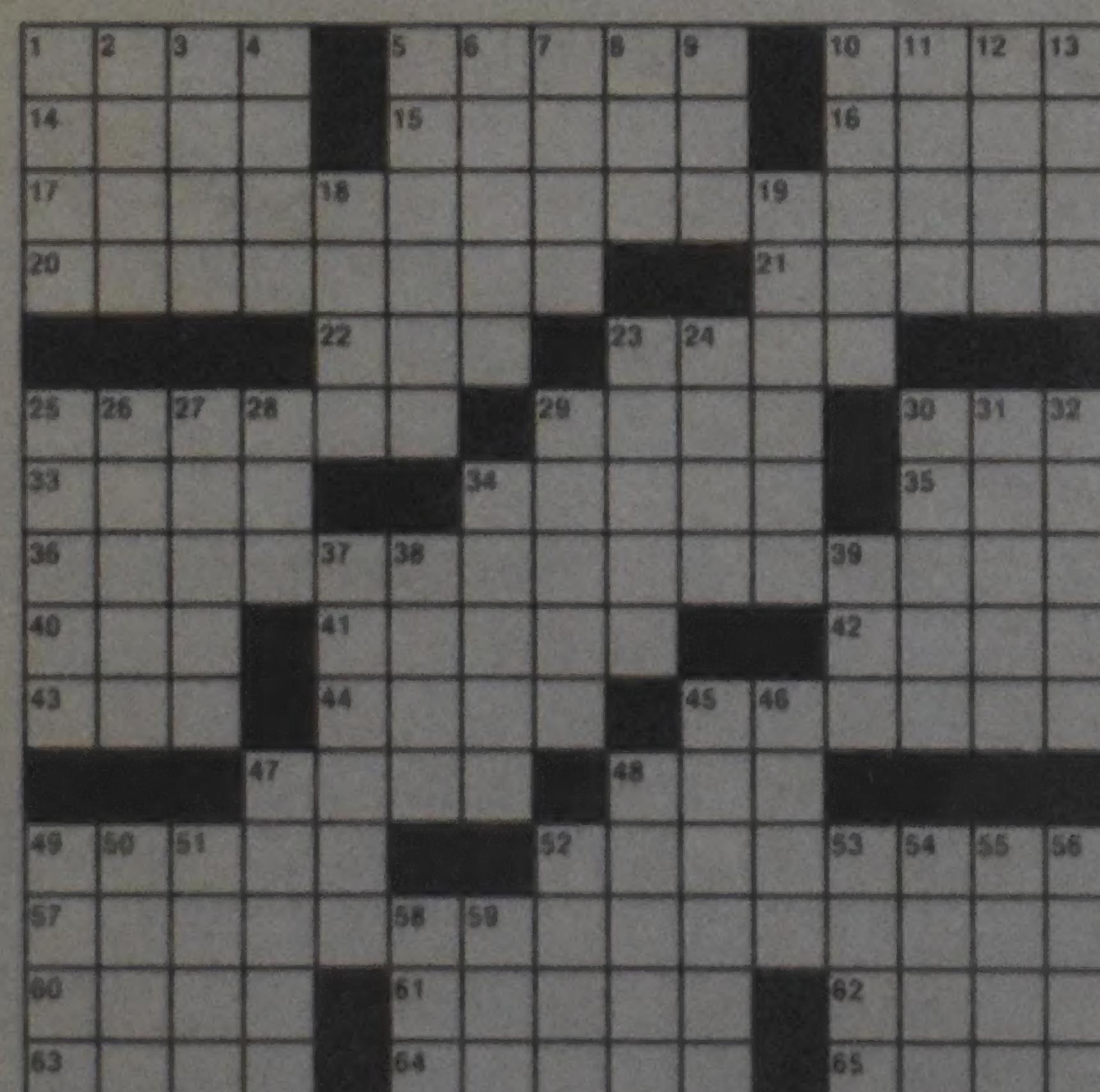
8255-13th Avenue,
Burnaby, BC V3N 2N3
Telephone (604) 521-0111

This Week's Puzzle

by John Feneck

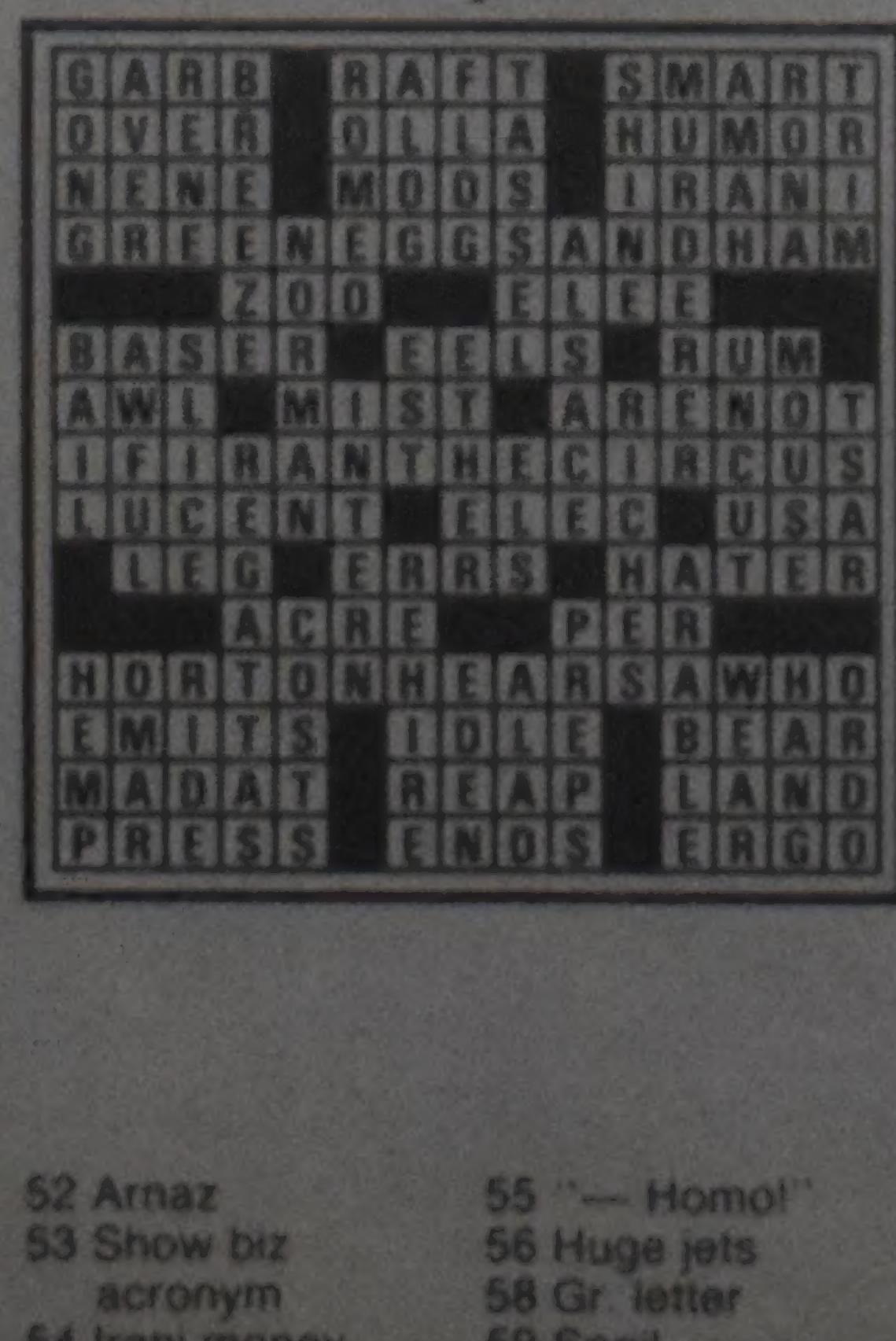
ACROSS
1 Ms Horne
5 Begets
10 Kermit e.g.
14 Sikorsky of aviation
15 Suppress
16 Inveigle
17 College degree
20 Sticky
21 Plateaus
22 — up (begin to golf)
23 Heidi's territory
25 Wires
29 Malaria fever
30 Flew removed earth
33 Music halls
34 Course
35 Heb. priest
36 Certain officers
40 Self-esteem
41 Butcher's stock
42 Encircled
43 Asian holiday
44 Trim
45 Camel's kin
47 Evergreens
48 Estuary
49 Muslim prince
52 States with emphasis
57 Auto repair foremen
60 Other
61 Headlong action
62 Delicacy of handling
63 Exigency
64 Hunter of myth
65 Stein fillers

DOWN
1 Bean
2 Mild expletive
3 Snack
4 Funny Johnson
5 Chain
6 — a Parade
7 Abundant
8 Asner and McMahon
9 Champagne word
10 Escapes
11 Operates
12 Killer whale



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Last week's puzzle



Calendar of Events

Sept. 15	Organist Jan Overduin in concert, 8 p.m., St. Catharines Cathedral, Church St., St. Catharines, Ont. Works by Bach, Vivaldi, De Grigny, etc. Series of recitals by the young Dutch organist Harm Hoeve. Unless indicated otherwise, all events start at 8 p.m. Sept. 16: Maranatha Can. Ref. Church, Surrey, B.C.; Sept. 17: Trinity CRC, Clearbrook, B.C.; Sept. 19: West End CRC, 7:30 p.m., Edmonton, Alta.; Sept. 21: Can. Ref. Church, Neerlandia, Alta.; Sept. 23: Can. Ref. Church, Carman, Man.; Sept. 25: Maranatha Can. Ref. Church, Fergus, Ont.; Sept. 29: Ebenezer Can. Ref. Church, Burlington, Ont.; Sept. 30: Can. Ref. Church, Attercliffe, Ont.	Sept. 27	Celebration and Praise Service for Redeemer's 10th anniversary, at 11 a.m., RC auditorium, Ancaster, Ont. Service will be led by Ancaster Fellowship CRC on the theme: "Praise the Lord and forget not all his benefits." Everyone welcome!
Sept. 16-30	CRWRC's 30th anniversary dinner, 7:30 p.m., John Knox Chr. School, Brampton, Ont. Guest speaker: Rev. Roy Berkenbosch. Worship and praise led by Colleen Reinders and Grace Moes. For tickets (\$25) call (416) 336-2920 or fax (416) 336-8344.	Sept. 27	City-wide hymnsing, 8 p.m., First CRC, Sarnia, Ont.
Sept. 18	Annual conference on "Teaching Reformed Theology" at Trinity Orthodox Ref. Church, St. Catharines, Ont. Speakers: Cornel Venema, Jerome Julien and Neal Hegeman. Call (416) 562-5196.	Sept. 28	World Home Bible League multi-media presentation "Where Jesus Walked," 8 p.m., First CRC, Guelph, Ont.
Sept. 18, 19	15th annual fall fair, 9:30 a.m., Camp Shalom, Cambridge, Ont. Theme: "Back on the farm." Lots to see and do!	Sept. 29	CCBF's 6th annual golf tournament and B.B.Q. Proceeds for "Beginnings." At Knollwood Golf Ancaster, Ont. B.B.Q. at Redeemer College. For info. call (416) 524-1203. Rain date: Oct. 1.
Sept. 19	"25 Years of Miracles," a special service of celebration for the ICS community, 7 p.m., Convocation Hall, U. of T., Toronto, Ont. For info. call (416) 979-2331.	Sept. 29 - Oct. 3	Teake van der Meer, well-known Frisian comedian, visits Canada! Sept. 29: Knox Chr. School, Bowmanville, Ont.; Sept. 30: Adelaide McDonald School Strathroy, Ont.; Oct. 2: Vineland Public School, Vineland, Ont.; Oct. 3: Jarvis District Chr. School, Jarvis, Ont. All evenings start at 8 p.m. For info call (519) 587-2162.
Sept. 20	Concerts by the famous Dutch choir "Vox Jubilans" (Waddinxveen, the Netherlands). All events at 8 p.m. Sept. 22: St. Paul's Presb. Church, Peterborough, Ont.; Sept. 23: Forward Baptist Church, Cambridge, Ont.; Sept. 24: Bayview Glen Church, Thornhill, Ont.	Oct. 7	Fall rally of the Can. Fed. of CRC Women (Wyoming Region), 10 a.m., First CRC, Sarnia, Ont. Speakers: Carol Kent and Rev. John Van Til.
Sep. 22-24	Redeemer College Alumni Homecoming, starting with 6 p.m. barbecue, at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.	Oct. 10-11	40th anniversary of the Reformed Church, Drayton, Ont.
Sept. 25	Redeemer College Alumni Association meeting at 9 a.m., followed by 10th anniversary celebration from 10:30 - 11:30 a.m., open house from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m., annual membership meeting at 2:30 p.m., and an open program at 8:30 p.m. All events at RC, Ancaster, Ont.	Oct. 13-30	CSS's Adriana Pierik will be in the Lower Fraser Valley, B.C.
Sept. 26	In the Dutch language you will find coverage on general news happenings • political affairs • back ground articles • church news • sports • Dutch history • regional and local news items Our English section contains: • Features on Dutch history • Dutch investments in N.A. • news on the Dutch in N.A. • Calendar of events and much more. Only \$20.40 yearly.	Oct. 16-18	M2/W2 10th anniversary celebrations at Lendrum MB Church, Edmonton, Alta. Also at Dalhousie MB Comm. Church, Calgary, Alta., and Community Hall, Duchess, Alta. Speaker: Vicki Dyk.
	In the Dutch language you will find coverage on general news happenings • political affairs • back ground articles • church news • sports • Dutch history • regional and local news items Our English section contains: • Features on Dutch history • Dutch investments in N.A. • news on the Dutch in N.A. • Calendar of events and much more. Only \$20.40 yearly.	Oct. 17	Annual meeting of the All-Ont. Diaconal Conference at John Knox Chr. School, Brampton, Ont. Join over 400 in a day of fellowship & training. Choose from 16 workshops and 15 seminars to help you grow in a ministry of mercy in Christ's name. Call (416) 646-4511 for a registration form.
	In the Dutch language you will find coverage on general news happenings • political affairs • back ground articles • church news • sports • Dutch history • regional and local news items Our English section contains: • Features on Dutch history • Dutch investments in N.A. • news on the Dutch in N.A. • Calendar of events and much more. Only \$20.40 yearly.	Oct. 23 - Nov. 7	World Home Bible League multi-media presentation "More than a Song," Oct. 23: 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, Cambridge, Ont.; Oct. 27: 7:30 p.m., CRC, Burlington, Ont.; Oct. 28: 7:30 p.m., Mount Hamilton CRC, Hamilton, Ont.; Oct. 29: 8 p.m., CRC, Tillsonburg, Ont.; Oct. 30: Beibel CRC, Dunnville, Ont.; Nov. 7: 7:30 p.m., Providence CRC, Beamsville, Ont.

Kroonprins sliep goed figuur op eerste staatsbezoek

the Windmill



Published twice per month

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Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Calls declined

— To Flamborough, Ont., Rev. Ralph Koops of Maranatha, Cambridge, Ont.

Address changes:

— Rev. David and Mrs. Kathy Weemhoff, 9301 Main Street, Ellsworth, Mich., 49729. Effective immediately.

— Rev. Harry A. and Mrs. Henny VanderWindt, 4 Hunter Rd., Grimsby, ON L3M 4A4, Canada. Effective immediately.

Change in worship times

— John Calvin CRC, Truro, N.S., will hold its Sunday morning services at 10 a.m. (instead of 10:30 a.m.), effective Sept. 13, 1992.

— Maranatha, Cambridge, Ont., will hold its Sunday evening services at 6 p.m. (instead of 7 p.m.), effective Sept. 13, 1992.

Redeemer College



YEARS
Of Learning for Serving

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Ps. 103:2

To all our supporters and friends: Thank you! We invite you to come and celebrate with us.

Sept. 25: Alumni Events

Sept. 26: 10:30 AM 10th Anniversary Celebration

1:30 PM Open House

2:30 PM Membership Meeting

8:30 PM Open Program (slides, talent show etc.)

Sept. 27: 11:00 AM Celebration and Praise service

News

Calvin Center team 'unwraps' its year's work on schooling

Robert VanderVennen

BRAMPTON, Ont. — Classroom learning that is integral rather than fragmented has energized the team working together for the past year on Christian schooling at the Center for Christian Scholarship at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich.

The team summarized its work recently for 100 interested persons at a one-day conference co-sponsored by the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto and Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.

Team leader Gloria Goris Stronks urged that schools move toward integral curricula rather than continue to use the fragmented, cognitive learning that comes through today's textbooks. Teaching the traditional disciplines leaves learning disconnected, as students are not equipped to see relationships in the whole fabric of God's creation.

Stronks referred to a recent article by Doug Blomberg that identifies questions to ask as teachers develop units of instruction. Such questions include: What is God's intention for the particular area of creation we are studying? How has this area been separated from its interconnections with the rest of God's creation? How can we bring healing where at present there is brokenness?

Stronks also urged that students be

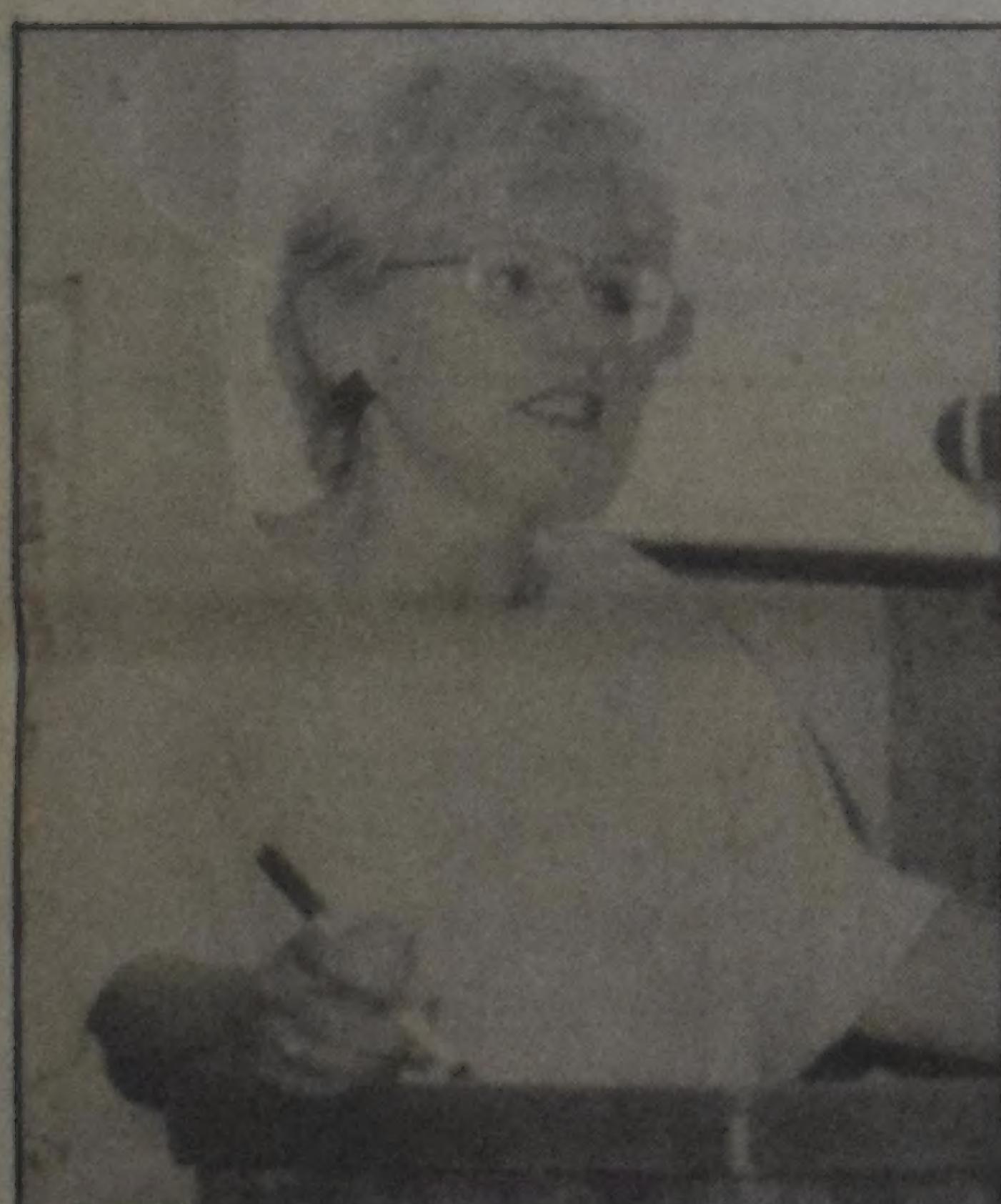


Photo: Robert VanderVennen
Gloria Goris Stronks calls for integral curricula in Christian schools.

more fully drawn into curriculum planning, handed out a 15-point guide to help teachers plan integral units and showed a sample calendar for the school year that gives provision during the year for teacher planning of the curriculum.

Harro Van Brummelen gave an overview of the vision of education shared by the research team. "Schooling for responsive discipleship" was his theme. He talked about "unwrapping our gifts" in ways that give students concrete means to learn through projects that go beyond cognitive learning. Van Brummelen expressed concern that classroom structures often stand in the way of learning in a covenant community.

Evaluation becomes a key issue

Robert Koole discussed evaluation, which is not a simple matter if a school gets away from short-answer test questions, he said. Evaluation should be built into planning the learning units, and it requires us to have a clear understanding of what should count as knowledge. Koole urged that students become more active in their own evaluation of their work.

Koole emphasized that evaluation must contribute to knowledge, that it should encourage exploratory inquiry. For evaluation to contribute to covenantal learning it must be done in a loving, patient way. It must also contribute valid information to parents and students about what is learned.

But be careful not to let grades be used to show how good the school is, he warned.

Testing should also be more used as a way of holding teachers accountable. A variety of kinds of evaluation should be used, because learning takes place in different ways. Exhibitions, portfolios and performances are forms of evaluation that should be used more often.

Meshing vision and practice

Peter DeBoer spoke about structural changes that are needed to close the gap between vision and practice. Steve Vryhof showed how we can help change to occur in Christian schools.

In an evaluative comment at the end, John Vriend of Redeemer College suggested that we need to struggle together more on the theoretical framework for schools. He said that the vision for schools that was presented seems to fit the social reconstructionist theory, which is a departure from a more academic theory.

Ken Badley, who is coming to ICS's education department, commented that the student-driven curriculum implies considerable faith in students. Hilda Roukema, who worked appreciatively with the similar approach of the "Joy in Learning" curriculum of the Curriculum Development Centre, expressed caution about the

huge amount of work this approach gives to teachers.

The Calvin Center book to be published during the coming year sets up two fictional Christian schools that work out this educational vision in concrete ways. The book presents a vision for Christian schools, the challenge of changes and recommendations for implementing them.

Volunteers taught Bible, lemonade in Nigeria

Bill Fledderus

OTTAWA — Gerald and Jackie Hogeterp discovered that they ended up teaching more than academic subjects during their recent 11-month stay in Mkar, Nigeria. Because they were foreign teachers, their Nigerian students watched them closely both in and out of the classroom.

The Hogeterps found that in such a situation a Christian lifestyle can speak louder than words.

"Occasionally it was even funny," says Jackie, during a telephone interview from her home in Ottawa. "Students would thank us for teaching them things we had never meant to teach, things we had never discussed as part of a classroom lesson."

"For example, Gerry once concluded his last class by saying, 'And now I'm going home to cook dinner for my wife.' Apparently he surprised a few of his students. You have to understand that women aren't always treated the best down there," says Jackie. "Near the end of the term, some of them approached him and said, 'Thank you for teaching us that we can cook for our wives.' "

Nigerians appreciative, freely religious

The Hogeterps found their students and neighbours to be a highly appreciative people.

"Another time a neighbour came over and out of the blue said, 'Thank you for teaching my boy how to work,'" relates Jackie. "Apparently Gerry had hired the boy to water our flowers. Since the boy

did not come as promised, Gerry decided to do the job himself. To our surprise, that shamed the boy into action. Soon after he began to tend to the work regularly. Eventually he saved up enough money to buy a pair of sandals."

Jackie says she also appreciated that the Nigerians feel entirely free to speak about their faith in all situations, that they are very aware of the spirit world and that they value people more than they value time.

Lemonade discovery

Jackie even taught some women how to make lemonade, she says.

"They had all these lemons lying around, but they were going bad because the people had no idea what lemons are good for. I had taken it for granted that everybody knows how to make lemonade, but I found out otherwise."

"They know now, though," she adds, "and they think it's great."

Classroom teaching

Jackie is an elementary school teacher by profession and her husband, Gerald, is the pastor of Calvary Christian Reformed Church in Ottawa. The two recently returned from a year's leave of absence spent at the Reformed Theological College in Mkar.

Gerald taught general courses introducing the Old and New Testaments, basic exegesis and related studies. Though his students (all male) were high school graduates, he found few had any prior knowledge of the historical background to the Old and New testaments.

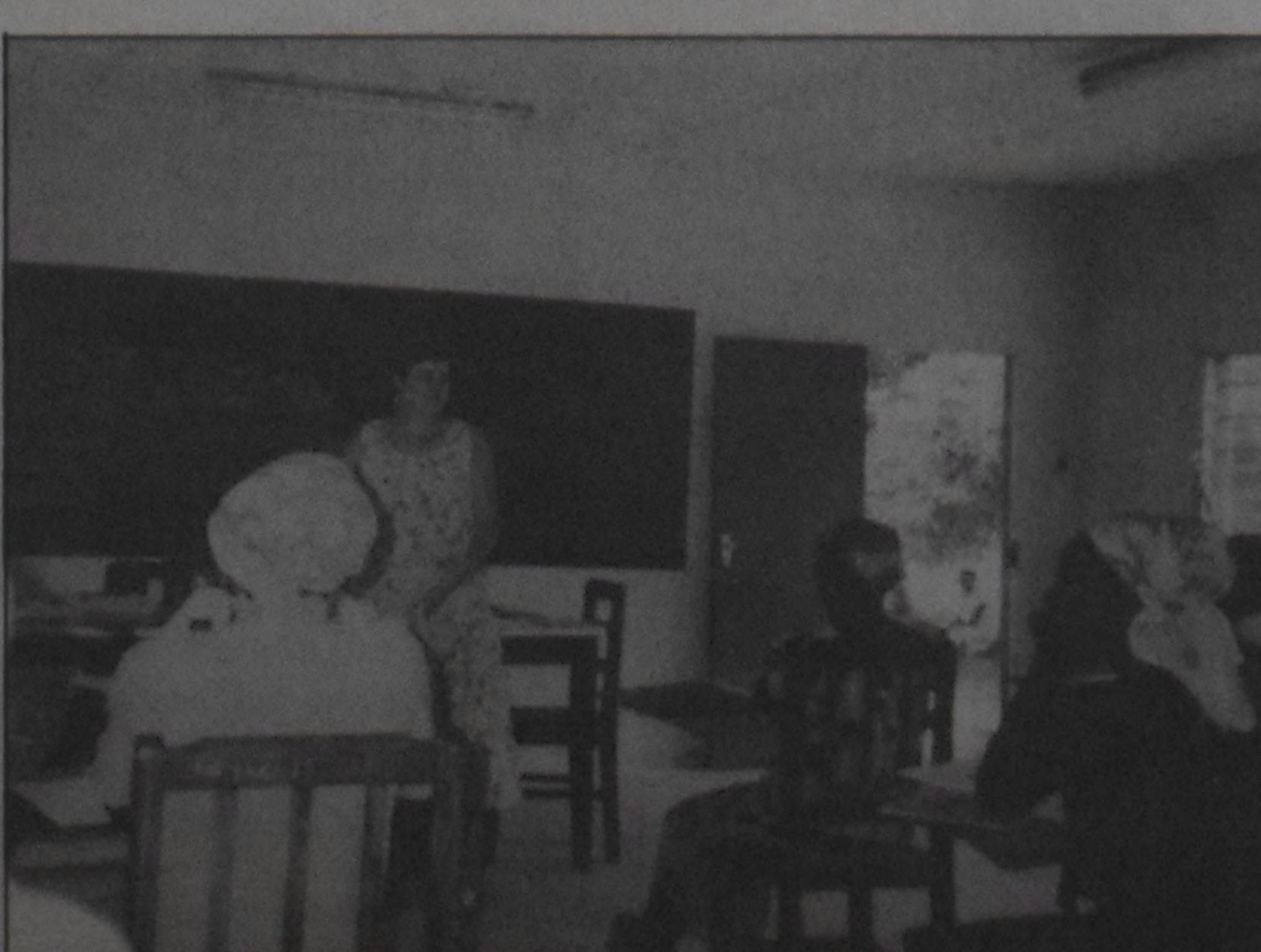


Photo courtesy Jackie Hogeterp
Jackie Hogeterp breaks into a smile while teaching English to a class of Nigerian women.

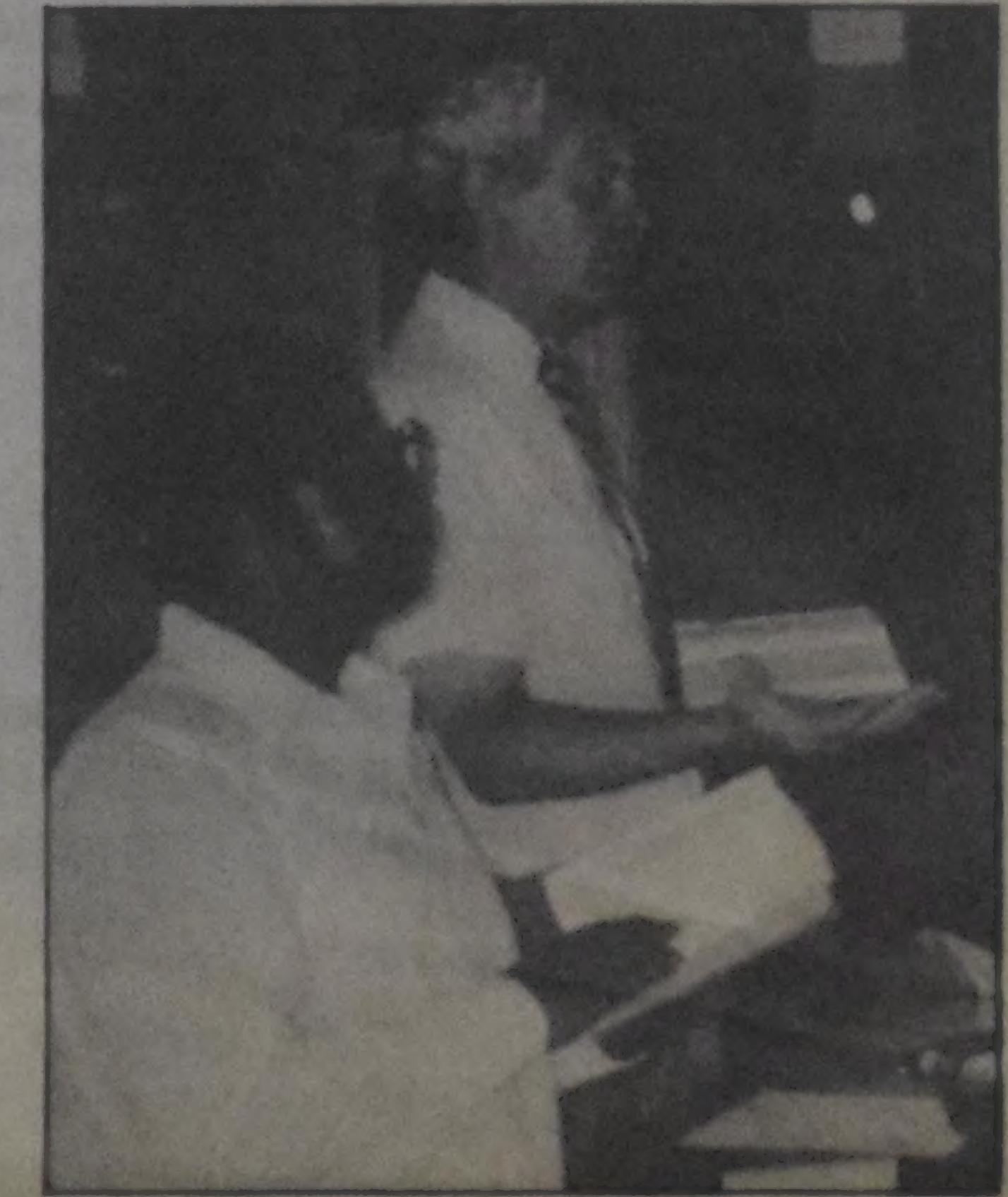


Photo courtesy Jackie Hogeterp
Rev. Gerald Hogeterp preaches a sermon with a Nigerian theology student.

Jackie tutored three missionary children in the mornings and taught English to students' wives in the afternoons. She found their education level to be lower than the recommended course of study and decided to abandon the advanced curriculum in order to begin again with the basics of English.

"The ladies were a delight to work with, and together we accomplished a great deal," she says. "We laughed so much that I'm sure no passers-by would have guessed we were holding a language class."

Rude welcome put behind them

The Hogeterps have some bad memories as well, chief among them the gunpoint burglary that welcomed them to their house in Nigeria. Though the event was traumatic and frightening, the Hogeterps are now able to shrug off the subject.

"There was good that came from it," says Jackie.

Christians of all stripes and social levels came from all around to pray with the Hogeterps for comfort after the robbery. The number of people who came and the comfort they offered were beyond expectation, say the Hogeterps.

Eventually they got over their fear, "although when it happened I just wanted to leave the country right away," says Jackie.

"Gerry calls it 'a night of terror and a day of grace,'" she says.

The Hogeterps were also supported by letters from their families, although only half of them arrived at their destination.

Relatives also donated money for 40 study Bibles, given as gifts to students and teachers at Mkar, many of whom cannot afford a Bible. A study Bible costs a month's wages in Nigeria.